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Signature

PATENT
#02-0060-UNI
Case #C7603(V)

1751

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Gupta et al.
Serial No.: 10/084,809
Filed: February 26, 2002
For: UNIT DOSE CLEANING PRODUCT

Edgewater, New Jersey 07020
August 1, 2002

SUBMISSION OF PRIORITY DOCUMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Pursuant to rule 55(b) of the Rules of Practice in Patent Cases, Applicant(s) is/are submitting herewith a certified copy of the United Kingdom Application No. 0104979.0 filed February 28, 2001, upon which the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 was made in the United States.

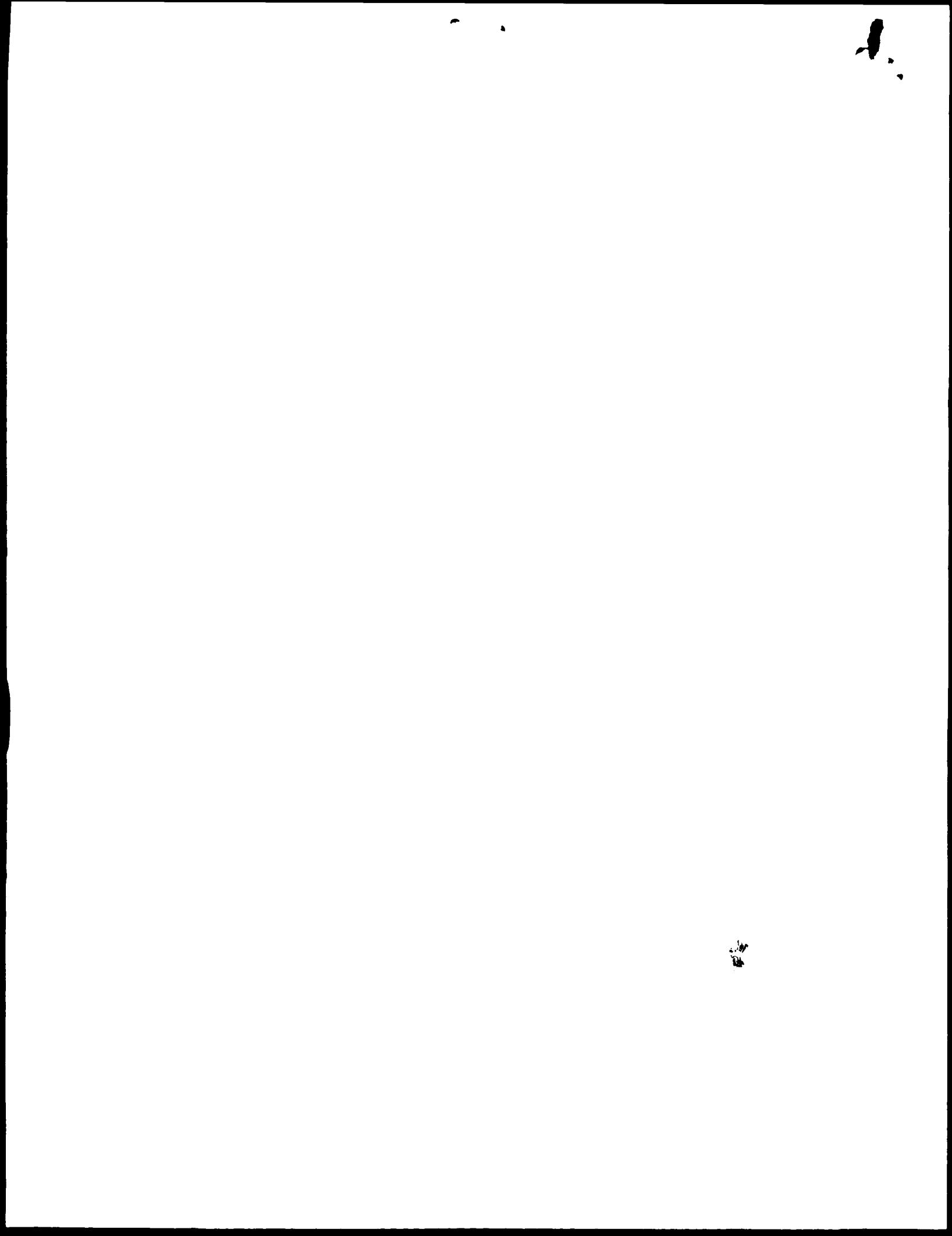
It is respectfully requested that the priority document be made part of the file history.

Respectfully submitted,

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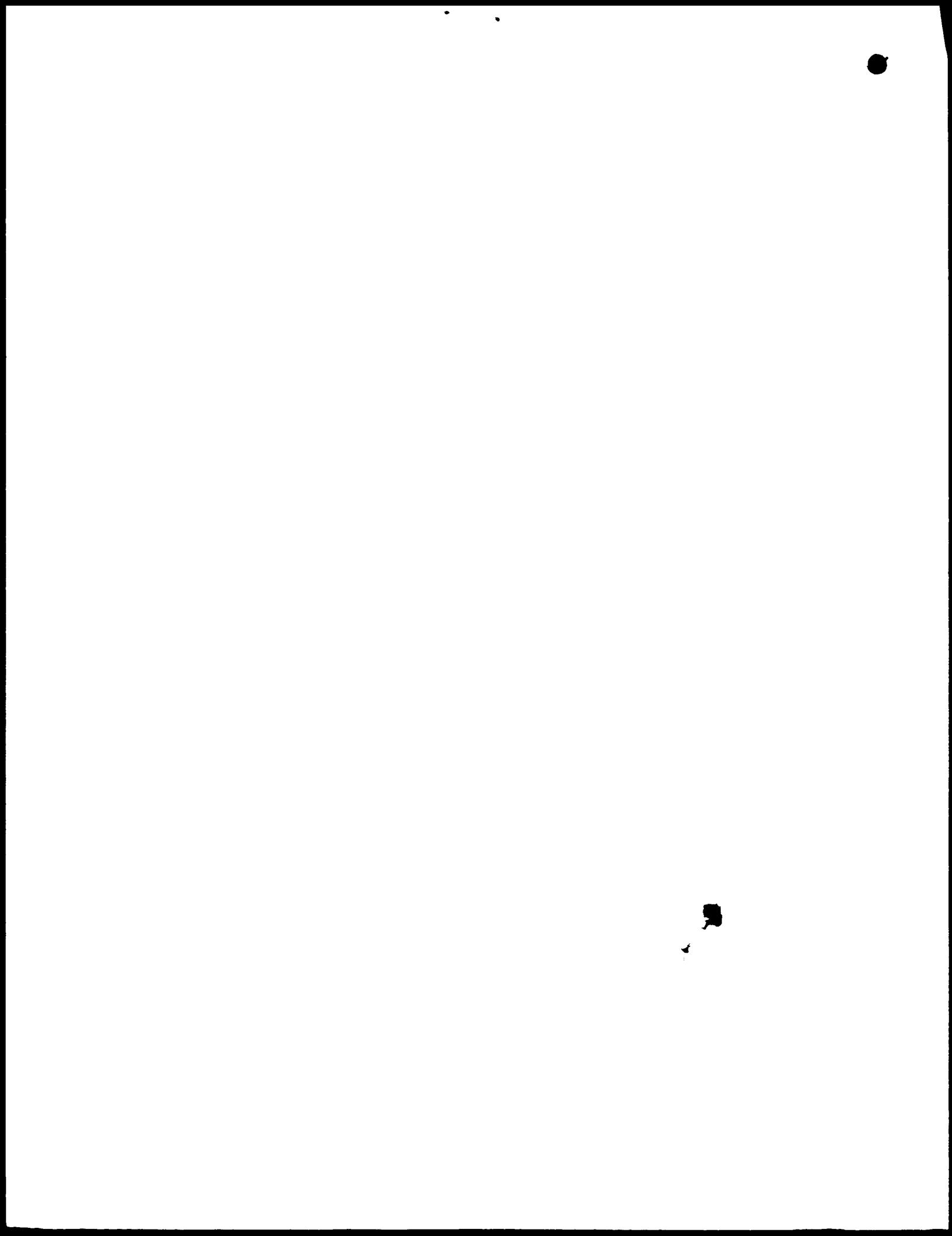
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Request for grant of a patent

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18 FEB 2001

1. Your reference

RMW/C7603(V)

2. Patent application number

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0104979.0

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of
each applicant (underline all surnames)Unilever PLC
Unilever House
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London EC4P 4BQ
UNITED KINGDOM

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

E6601628032

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the
Country/state of its incorporation

UNITED KINGDOM

4. Title of the invention

UNIT DOSE CLEANING PRODUCT

5. Name of your agent (if you have one)

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Description 60

Claim(s) 2

Abstract 1

11/4

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Translation of priority documents

Statement of inventorship and right to grant of a patent (Patents Form 7/77)

Request for preliminary examination 1
and search (Patents Form 9/77)

Request for substantive examination
(Patents Form 10/77)

Any other documents
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11. I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.

Signature

[Signature]

Date 28.02.2001

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom

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UNIT DOSE CLEANING PRODUCT

FIELD OF INVENTION

The present invention relates to unit dose liquid cleaning product containing substantially
5 non-aqueous cleaning compositions.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

Cleaning products are traditionally often liquids, viscous or thin, such as known for
10 personal cleaning (bath and shower liquids and shampoos) or for domestic cleaning
(hand dish wash and other hard surface cleaning, laundry-cleaning etc.) Other products
are solids, such as powders, granules, small capsules (up to 2mm diameter) or more
recently tablets, for laundry and machine dish wash, and soap bars for skin cleaning.
Recently, so called unit dose products are experiencing an increasing success with
15 consumers, because they eliminate the need for manipulating, and possibly spilling,
liquids or powders and simplify the use of a correct dose of the cleaning product for the
required purpose. Examples thereof are the laundry and machine dish wash tablets
mentioned above and recently described in F.Schambil and M. Böcker, Tenside Surf. Det.
37 (2000) 1.

20 Peroxygen bleaches are well known for their ability to remove stains from substrates.
They are common ingredients in cleaning products, especially those for laundry cleaning.
Traditionally, the substrate is subjected to hydrogen peroxide, or to substances which can
generate hydroperoxyl radicals, such as inorganic or organic peroxides. Generally, these
25 systems must be activated. One method of activation is to employ wash temperatures of
60°C or higher. However, these high temperatures often lead to inefficient cleaning, and
can also cause premature damage to the substrate.

30 A preferred approach to generating hydroperoxyl bleach species is the use of inorganic
peroxides coupled with organic precursor compounds. These systems are employed for
many commercial laundry powders. For example, various European systems are based
on tetraacetyl ethylenediamine (TAED) as the organic precursor coupled with sodium
perborate or sodium percarbonate, whereas in the United States laundry bleach products

are typically based on sodium nonanoyloxybenzenesulphonate (SNOBS) as the organic precursor coupled with sodium perborate.

5 Our copending UK Patent Application No. 0009340.1, unpublished at the priority date of this application describes a unit dose water soluble package formed from a copolymeric polyvinyl alcohol film and containing a substantially non-aqueous liquid composition which comprises at least one ionic ingredient having an exchangeable hydrogen ion and a molar excess of a stabilising compound. However, there is no disclosure of such a composition
10 having bleaching capabilities.

Another unit dose product contain a substantially non-aqueous liquid detergent in a rigid shell, also without bleaching capability is disclosed in our copending European Patent Application No 00201710.1, again, unpublished at the priority date of this application.

15 A problem with unit dose products incorporating substantially non-aqueous liquid detergents is that only a small liquid product volume is necessary to get effective cleaning. If one desires to incorporate a conventional peroxygen bleach in an effective bleaching amount, the internal volume of the product is really too small to accommodate
20 it. The present invention overcomes this problem by incorporating a catalyst of bleaching by atmospheric oxygen.

The specification of WO 00/12677 discloses compositions and methods for catalytically bleaching substrates with atmospheric oxygen, using a metal-ligand complex as catalyst.
25 These complexes allow catalytic bleaching by atmospheric oxygen without inclusion of peroxygen bleaches.

Our copending International Patent Application No. PCT/EP00/08076, unpublished at the priority date of this application, describes a liquid bleaching composition comprising an
30 organic substance which forms a complex with a transition metal, the complex catalysing bleaching of a substrate by atmospheric oxygen, and a liquid carrier or solvent, wherein the composition is substantially devoid of peroxygen bleach or a peroxy-based or - generating bleach system. The composition is therefore preferably insensitive or stable to catalase, which acts on peroxy species. This is disclosed in various product forms

such as aqueous and nonaqueous compositions in dilute or concentrated products or sheets, tapes or sticking plasters impregnated with the liquid or with the liquid contained with microcapsules. However, no unit dose product form is disclosed in which a package capable of dissolving, disintegrating or dissolving in the wash liquor contains a
5 substantially nonaqueous liquid cleaning product.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

10 In a first aspect, the present invention provides a unit dose cleaning product comprising a capsule formed of a material capable of dissolving, disintegrating or dispersing in a wash liquor, the capsule being filled with a substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition in an amount sufficient to clean a single wash load, said composition including an organic substance which forms a complex with a transition metal, the
15 complex being capable of catalysing bleaching of a substrate by atmospheric oxygen.

In a second aspect, the present invention provides a method of cleaning a substrate comprising bringing into contact, a wash liquor in which is immersed, a unit dose product
20 according to the first aspect of the present invention, and simultaneously or subsequently contacting the substrate with the wash liquor.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

25 The Capsule

The capsule may be of any form or substance capable of dissolving, disintegrating or dispersing in the wash liquor to deliver the contained unit dose of substantially non-aqueous liquid detergent composition. As used herein, the term "capsule" means any
30 rigid or non rigid enclosure, whether seamless or made of two or more portions, of sheet or other material bonded or sealed to make the closed capsule containing the liquid ingredients. Optionally, it may comprise two or more compartments, e.g. to keep separate mutually incompatible components or components to be delivered at different times in the wash process.

For example, a unit-dose cleaning product may be a product of which a limited number of units provide the right amount of detergent to perform the cleaning operation for which the product is intended. This limited number will normally be between 1 and 10, preferably

5 not more than 5 and typically between 1 and 3. Thus, for a floor cleaning product these 1-3 units in a bucket of water will usually provide a cleaning liquid of the desired strength, whereas for a hand dishwash product the equivalent would be 1-3 units in a dishwash bowl of water.

10 If the unit-dose cleaning product is water soluble, it is soluble to the extent that the dose (i.e. number of units) intended for a given amount of water should be able to give a clear solution and no solid particles visible to the naked eye should remain. A suitable dose unit should quickly dissolve 2000 times its weight of water, which amounts to a dilution of 2000 fold. Thus, all components in 10g of unit dose product should be completely soluble
15 in 20l of water. More suitably the product, and therefore all the components in it, would also allow a dilution of only 1000 times, more preferably only 500 times even more preferably 200 times. Such solutions may be made in hot water, i.e. 100°C or less, but preferably the product is also completely soluble in less hot water, i.e. at 70°C or below, more preferably at 50°C or even 30°C. Quick dissolution is defined as complete
20 dissolution within 5 minutes with slight stirring, preferably within 2 minutes, more preferably within 1 minute.

The capsule may for example be formed of a polyvinyl alcohol (PVOH) or a copolymer containing same.

25 PVOH can be made by the polymerisation of vinyl acetate, followed by hydrolysis, conveniently by reaction with sodium hydroxide. However, the resulting film has a highly symmetrical, hydrogen-bonded structure and is not readily soluble in cold water. PVOH films which are suitable for the formation of water soluble packages are typically polymers
30 produced from copolymerisation of vinyl acetate and another comonomer which contains a carboxylic function. Examples of such comonomers include monocarboxylates, such as acrylic acid, and dicarboxylates, such as itaconic acid, which may be present during polymerisation as esters. Alternatively, the anhydride of maleic acid may be used as the

copolymer. The inclusion of the comonomer reduces the symmetry of and degree of hydrogen bonding in the final film and renders the film soluble even in cold water.

Suitable PVOH films for use in a package according to the invention are commercially available and described, for example, in EP-B-0291198. PVOH films for use in a package according to the invention can be made by the copolymerisation of vinyl acetate and a carboxylate-containing monomer (for example acrylic, maleic or itaconic acid or acid ester), followed by partial (for example up to about 90%) hydrolysis with sodium hydroxide.

10

A water soluble capsule made from PVOH or a PVOH copolymer can be made by a thermoforming according to any of the methods described in any of WO-A-00/55044, WO-A-00/55045, WO-A-00/55046, WO-A-00/55068, WO-A-00/55069 and WO-A-15 00/55415.

By way of example, a thermoforming process is now described where a number of packages according to the invention are produced from two sheets of water soluble material. In this regard recesses are formed in the film sheet using a forming die having a plurality of cavities with dimensions corresponding generally to the dimensions of the packages to be produced. Further, a single heating plate is used for thermoforming the film for all the cavities, and in the same way a single sealing plate is described.

20 A first sheet of polyvinyl alcohol film is drawn over a forming die so that the film is placed over the plurality of forming cavities in the die. In this example each cavity is generally dome shape having a round edge, the edges of the cavities further being radiussed to remove any sharp edges which might damage the film during the forming or sealing steps of the process. Each cavity further includes a raised surrounding flange. In order to maximise package strength; the film is delivered to the forming die in a crease free form 25 and with minimum tension. In the forming step, the film is heated to 100 to 120°C, preferably approximately 110°C, for up to 5 seconds, preferably approximately 700 microseconds. A heating plate is used to heat the film, which plate is positioned to superpose the forming die. During this preheating step, a vacuum of 0.5 bar is pulled through the

30

pre-heating plate to ensure intimate contact between the film and the pre-heating plate, this intimate contact ensuring that the film is heated evenly and uniformly (the extent of the vacuum is dependant of the thermoforming conditions and the type of film used, however in the present context a vacuum of less than 0.6 bar was found to be suitable)

5 Non-uniform heating results in a formed package having weak spots. In addition to the vacuum, it is possible to blow air against the film to force it into intimate contact with the preheating plate.

The thermoformed film is moulded into the cavities blowing the film off the heating plate

10 and/or by sucking the film into the cavities thus forming a plurality of recesses in the film which, once formed, are retained in their thermoformed orientation by the application of a vacuum through the walls of the cavities. This vacuum is maintained at least until the packages are sealed. Once the recesses are formed and held in position by the vacuum, a liquid composition according to the invention is added to each of the recesses. A

15 second sheet of polyvinyl alcohol film is then superposed on the first sheet across the filled recesses and heat-sealed thereto using a sealing plate. In this case the heat sealing plate, which is generally flat, operates at a temperature of about 140 to 160°C, and contacts the films for 1 to 2 seconds and with a force of 8 to 30kg/cm², preferably 10 to 20kg/cm². The raised flanges surrounding each cavity ensure that the films are sealed 20 together along the flange to form a continuous seal. The radiussed edge of each cavity is at least partly formed by a resiliently deformable material, such as for example silicone rubber. This results in reduced force being applied at the inner edge of the sealing flange to avoid heat/pressure damage to the film.

25 Once sealed, the packages formed are separated from the web of sheet film using cutting means. At this stage it is possible to release the vacuum on the die, and eject the formed packages from the forming die. In this way the packages are formed, filled and sealed while nesting in the forming die. In addition they may be cut while in the forming die as well.

30 During the forming, filling and sealing steps of the process, the relative humidity of the atmosphere is controlled to ca. 50% humidity. This is done to maintain the heat sealing characteristics of the film. When handling thinner films, it may be necessary to reduce

the relative humidity to ensure that the films have a relatively low degree of plasticisation and are therefore stiffer and easier to handle.

Other suitable encapsulating materials include synthetic or natural polymers such as a starch derivative (e.g. chemically modified starch), polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylpyrrolidone or a polyethylene or polyethylene/polypropylene glycol, or mono-, di- or oligosaccharide such as sorbitol, maltitol, isomalt, glucose or mixtures thereof. Preferred such materials are those which can be converted into a viscous liquid or "molten glass"-like state on heating.

10

The Substantially Non-Aqueous Liquid Cleaning Composition

The substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition has particular application in detergent formulations, especially for laundry cleaning. Accordingly, in another preferred embodiment, the present invention provides a liquid detergent composition comprising a liquid bleaching composition as defined above and additionally a surface-active material, optionally together with detergency builder. In addition, substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition may optionally contain soluble and non-soluble enzymes, enzyme stabiliser systems, functional polymers, polymers to modify the appearance and sensory properties of the liquid bleaching composition and optionally other minors such as a perfume or a fluorescer.

The substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition must contain at least one non-aqueous liquid. Further, the non-aqueous liquid itself and/or another component of the composition must provide a cleaning function when released into the wash liquor.

By "substantially non-aqueous" it is meant that that the amount of water in the liquid composition is below the level at which the package would dissolve through contact with its contents. Preferably, the liquid composition comprises no more than about 25% , e.g. no more than 20% or no more than 10%, still more preferably no more than about 7%, even more preferably no more than about 5% and most preferably no more than from about 3% to about 4%, by weight water. However, in some cases, it may be possible (whether by reason of the thickness of the film used, the physical properties, such as

viscosity, of the liquid composition or otherwise) to use higher quantities of water in the liquid composition inside the package according to the invention.

The substantially non-aqueous liquid composition may be substantially Newtonion or else 5 non-Newtonion in rheology. The latter especially applies when the composition comprises dispersed solids. Therefore, for the avoidance of doubt, all viscosities expressed herein are measured at a shear rate of 21s^{-1} .

The viscosity of the composition is from 25 mPaS, 50 mPaS, 75 mPaS or 100 mPaS, 10 preferably 125 mPaS, more preferably 150mPaS to 10,000 mPaS, for example above 150 mPaS but no more than 10,000 mPaS. The alternative embodiment of the invention relates to VFFS encapsulation in which case, the minimum viscosity must be 150 mPaS, for example above 150 mPaS.

15 The composition may be considered as falling into the sub-classes of thin liquids, thick liquids, and gels/pastes.

The thin liquids may have a minimum viscosity of 25, 50, 75, 100, 125 ,150 mPaS or above 150 mPaS for example 175 mPaS, preferably 200 mPaS. They may for example 20 have a maximum viscosity of 500 mPaS preferably 450 mPaS more preferably 400 mPaS or even 250 mPaS.

The thick liquids may have a minimum viscosity of 400 mPaS, for example 350 mPaS, or even 300 mPaS and a maximum viscosity of 1,500 mPaS, preferably 1,200 mPaS.

25 The gels or pastes may have a minimum viscosity of 1,400 mPaS, for example 1,500 mPaS, preferably 1,750 mPaS, 2000 mPaS, 2,500 mPaS, 3,000 mPaS or even 3,500 mPaS. Their maximum viscosity may be 10,000 mPaS, preferably 9,000 mPaS, more preferably 8,000 mPaS, 7,500 mPaS or even 4,000 mPaS.

The non-aqueous liquid may comprise one or more non-aqueous liquid components. These may be one or more liquid surfactants and/or one or more non-aqueous non-surfactant liquids.

5 Suitable liquid surfactants liquid nonionic surfactants.

Nonionic detergent surfactants are well-known in the art. They normally consist of a water-solubilizing polyalkoxylene or a mono- or di-alkanolamide group in chemical combination with an organic hydrophobic group derived, for example, from alkylphenols in
10 which the alkyl group contains from about 6 to about 12 carbon atoms, dialkylphenols in which primary, secondary or tertiary aliphatic alcohols (or alkyl-capped derivatives thereof), preferably having from 8 to 20 carbon atoms, monocarboxylic acids having from 10 to about 24 carbon atoms in the alkyl group and polyoxypropylene. Also common are fatty acid mono- and dialkanolamides in which the alkyl group of the fatty acid radical
15 contains from 10 to about 20 carbon atoms and the alkyloyl group having from 1 to 3 carbon atoms. In any of the mono- and di-alkanolamide derivatives, optionally, there may be a polyoxyalkylene moiety joining the latter groups and the hydrophobic part of the molecule. In all polyalkoxylene containing surfactants, the polyalkoxylene moiety
20 preferably consists of from 2 to 20 groups of ethylene oxide or of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide groups. Amongst the latter class, particularly preferred are those described in the applicants' published European specification EP-A-225,654, especially for use as all or part of the solvent. Also preferred are those ethoxylated nonionics which are the condensation products of fatty alcohols with from 9 to 15 carbon atoms
25 condensed with from 3 to 11 moles of ethylene oxide. Examples of these are the condensation products of C₁₁₋₁₃ alcohols with (say) 3 or 7 moles of ethylene oxide. These may be used as the sole nonionic surfactants or in combination with those of the described in the last-mentioned European specification, especially as all or part of the solvent.

30 Another class of suitable nonionics comprise the alkyl polysaccharides (polyglycosides/oligosaccharides) such as described in any of specifications U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,640,998; 3,346,558; 4,223,129; EP-A-92,355; EP-A-99,183; EP 70,074, '75, '76, '77; EP 75,994, '95, '96.

Nonionic detergent surfactants normally have molecular weights of from about 300 to about 11,000. Mixtures of different nonionic detergent surfactants may also be used, provided the mixture is liquid at room temperature. Mixtures of nonionic detergent surfactants with other detergent surfactants such as anionic, cationic or ampholytic 5 detergent surfactants and soaps may also be used. If such mixtures are used, the mixture must be liquid at room temperature.

Suitable non-aqueous non-surfactant liquids those having the preferred molecular forms referred to above although other kinds may be used, especially if combined with those of 10 the former, more preferred types. In general, the non-surfactant solvents can be used alone or with in combination with liquid surfactants. Non-surfactant solvents which have molecular structures which fall into the former, more preferred category include ethers, polyethers, polyols, alkylamines and fatty amines, (especially di- and tri-alkyl- and/or fatty- N-substituted amines), alkyl (or fatty) amides and mono- and di- N-alkyl substituted 15 derivatives thereof, alkyl (or fatty) carboxylic acid lower alkyl esters, ketones, aldehydes, and glycerides. Specific examples include respectively, di-alkyl ethers, polyethylene glycols, alkyl ketones (such as acetone) and glyceryl trialkylcarboxylates (such as glyceryl tri-acetate), glycerol, propylene glycol, and sorbitol.

20 Other suitable solvents are alcohols, e.g. having up to 6 carbon atoms but preferably lower alcohols, such as ethanol, or higher alcohols, such as dodecanol, as well as alkanes and olefins. However, they can be combined with other solvent materials which are surfactants and non-surfactants having the aforementioned "preferred" kinds of molecular structure. Even though they appear not to play a role in the deflocculation 25 process, it is often desirable to include them for lowering the viscosity of the product and/or assisting soil removal during cleaning.

30 Preferably, the compositions of the invention contain the organic solvent (whether or not comprising liquid surfactant) in an amount of at least 10% by weight of the total composition. The amount of the solvent present in the composition may be as high as about 90%, but in most cases the practical amount will lie between 20 and 70% and preferably between 20 and 50% by weight of the composition.

The composition may also comprise one or more solid dissolved and/or dispersed in the substantially non-aqueous liquid. When these are dispersed solids, it is preferred also to include one or more deflocculating agents as described in EP-A-0 266 199.

5 Some of these ingredients may be of an acidic nature, such as soaps or the acid precursors of anionic surfactants (which can be used for their surfactant properties and/or as deflocculants). These materials have an exchangeable hydrogen ion. In the case where the capsule comprises a material made of polyvinyl alcohol copolymer having a comonomer with a carboxylate function, this can lead to a problem.

10 When the plastics film of the envelope is a copolymer film containing polyvinyl alcohol carboxylic acid (or carboxylate) groups in proximity to hydroxyl groups on the same carbon chain and there is an attendant drive towards cyclisation of these groups by water elimination to form lactones. A low level of lactone formation is desirable to improve the 15 mechanical properties of the film. However, the formation of excessive amounts of lactones is undesirable as this tends to reduce the cold water solubility of the film, giving rise to a danger of undissolved film residues when the package is used.

20 The problem of excessive lactone formation is particularly acute when the liquid composition inside the package comprises ionic species having an exchangeable hydrogen ion, for example fatty acids or the acid precursors of anionic surfactants.

25 This problem may be solved by including in the composition, a stabilising compound effective for combining with the exchangeable hydrogen ions to hinder the formation of lactones within the film. This stabilising compound should be in molar excess relative to the component(s) having an exchangeable ion. This molar excess is preferably 105 mole %, preferably 110 mole % of the stoichiometric amount necessary for complete neutralisation. It is preferably an organic base such as one or more amines, e.g. monoethanolamine, triethanolamine and mixtures thereof. When the stabilising 30 compound is an inorganic base such as an alkali metal (e.g. sodium or potassium) hydroxide, or ammonium hydroxide, it may, however, present in an amount of from 95 mole % to 105 mole % relative to the component(s) having an exchangeable hydrogen ion.

In other aspects of the invention, for the stabilising compound, instead of the 95 mole %, we may claim as minimum, any of 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 94.4, 96, 96.5, 97, 97.5, 98, 98.5, 99 and 99.5 mole %. Also, independently of any particular minimum, in other aspects of the invention, as maximum, we may claim any of 100.25, 100.5, 101, 101.5, 102, 102.5, 5 103, 103.5, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109 and 110 mole%.

Other possible stabilising compounds are alkaline earth metal hydroxides or other bases which do liberate water on protonation.

10 Yet other suitable stabilising compounds are amines other than monoethanolamine and triethanolamine, organic Lewis bases or other organic or inorganic bases provided that they will interact effectively with labile protons within the detergent composition to hinder the production of lactones in the film.

15 When the stabilising agent is used with a PVOH comonomer package as described above, it provides an advantage in relation to the avoidance of film residues being left on clothes. By preserving the cold water solubility of the film the invention helps to ensure that even when the package of the invention becomes trapped within the laundry load 20 such that there is only restricted water in contact with the film to dissolve it, dissolution is still sufficiently rapid such that there will be no or minimal residues at the end of the wash cycle.

25 When present the ionic ingredient with exchangeable hydrogen ions may, for example, be selected from anionic surfactant acid precursors and fatty acids.

30 Suitable acid precursors of anionic surfactants include alkylbenzene sulphonic acid, particularly C₈₋₁₅ linear alkylbenzene sulphonic acids. Other suitable surfactant acids include the acid forms of olefin sulphonates, alkyl ether sulphates, alkyl sulphates or alkane sulphonates.

A wide range of fatty acids are suitable for inclusion in a liquid composition according to the invention, for example C₈₋₂₄ alkyl or alkenyl monocarboxylic acids. Saturated or unsaturated fatty acids may be used. Examples of suitable fatty acids include oleic acid, lauric acid or hardened tallow fatty acid.

5

Anionic surfactant acids are well known to those skilled in the art. Examples suitable for use in a liquid composition according to the invention include alkylbenzene sulphonic acid, particularly C₈₋₁₅ linear alkylbenzene sulphonic acids. Other suitable surfactant acids include the acid forms of olefin sulphonates, alkyl ether sulphates, alkyl sulphates or alkane sulphonates.

10

Optional Bleach

Whilst the present invention is based on the catalytic bleaching of a substrate by atmospheric oxygen or air, it will be appreciated that small amounts of hydrogen peroxide or peroxy-based or -generating systems may be included in the liquid composition, if desired, provided that the chemical and physical stability of the composition is not thereby adversely affected to an unacceptable level. Therefore, the liquid bleaching composition preferably contains from 0 to 50 %, more preferably from 0 to 10 %, still more preferably from 0 to 5 %, and optimally from 0 to 2 % by molar weight on an oxygen basis, of peroxygen bleach or peroxy-based or -generating bleach systems. Preferably, however, the liquid bleaching composition will be wholly devoid of peroxygen bleach or peroxy-based or -generating bleach systems.

20

25 Thus, at least 10 %, preferably at least 50 % and optimally at least 90 % of any bleaching of the substrate is effected by oxygen sourced from the air.

Suitable option oxygen bleaches are, for example in the form of an inorganic persalt preferably with an activator, or as a peroxy acid compound.

30

In the case of the inorganic persalt bleaches, the activator makes the bleaching more effective at lower temperatures, i.e. in the range from ambient temperature to about 60°C, so that such bleach systems are commonly known as low-temperature bleach systems and are well known in the art. The inorganic persalt such as sodium perborate, both the

monohydrate and the tetrahydrate, acts as release active oxygen in solution, and activator is usually an organic compound having one or more reactive acyl residues, which cause the formation of peracids, the latter providing for more effective bleaching action at lower temperatures than the peroxy-bleach compound alone. The ratio by weight of the peroxy 5 bleach compound to the activator is from about 15:1 to about 2:1, preferably from about 10:1 to about 3.5:1. Whilst the amount of the bleach system, i.e. peroxy bleach compounds and activator may be varied between about 5% and about 35% by weight of the total liquid, it is preferred to use from about 6% to about 30% of the ingredients forming the bleach system. Thus, the preferred level of the peroxy bleach compound in 10 the composition is between 5.5% and about 27% by weight, while the preferred level of the activator is between about 0.5% and about 40%, most preferably between about 1% and about 5% by weight.

Typical examples of the suitable peroxybleach compounds are alkalinmetal perborates, 15 both tetrahydrides and monohydrates, alkali metal, percarbonates, alkylhydroperoxides such as cumene hydroperoxide and t-butyl hydroperoxide, persilicates and perphosphates, of which sodium perborate is preferred. Activators for peroxybleach compounds have been amply described in the literature, including in British patent specifications 836988, 855735, 907356, 907358, 907950, 1003310 and 1246339, U.S. 20 Pat. No. 3332882 and 4128494, Canadian patent specification 844481 and South African patent specification 68/6344.

The exact mode of action of such activators is not known, but it is believed that peracids are formed by reaction of the activators with the inorganic peroxy compound, which 25 peracids then liberate active-oxygen by decomposition.

They are generally compounds which contain N-acyl or O-acyl residues in the molecule and which exert their activating action on the peroxy compounds on contact with these in the washing liquor.

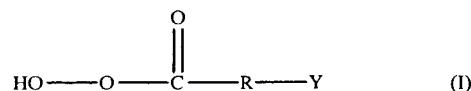
30 Typical examples of activators within these groups are polyacylated alkylene diamines, such N,N,N¹N¹- tetraacetylethylene diamine (TAED) and N,N,N¹,N¹- tetraacetylmethylene diamine (TAMD); acylated glycolurils, such as tetraacetylglcoluril (TAGU); triacetylcyanurate and sodium sulphophenyl ethyl carbonic acid ester.

A particularly preferred activator is N,N,N¹N¹-tetraacetylene diamine (TAED). The activator may be incorporated as fine particles or even in granular form, such as described in the applicants' UK patent specification GB 2 053 998 A. Specifically, it is 5 preferred to have an activator of an average particle size of less than 150 micrometers, which gives significant improvement in bleach efficiency. The sedimentation losses, when using an activator with an average particle size of less than 150 μ m, are substantially decreased. Even better bleach performance is obtained if the average 10 particle size of the activator is less than 100 μ m. However, too small a particle size can give increased decomposition and handling problems prior to processing. However, these particle sizes have to be reconciled with the requirements for dispersion in the solvent (it will be recalled that the aforementioned first product from requires particles which are as small as possible within practical limits). Liquid activators may also be used, e.g. as hereinafter described.

15

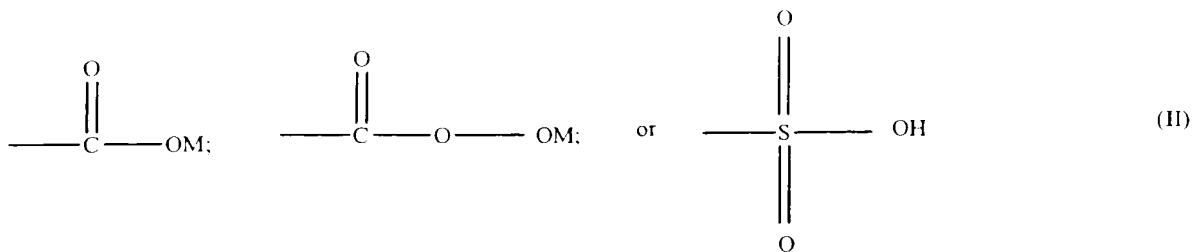
The organic peroxyacid compound bleaches (which in some cases can also act as structurants/deflocculants) are preferably those which are solid at room temperature and most preferably should have a melting point of at least 50°C. Most commonly, they are the organic peroxyacids and water-soluble salts thereof having the general formula

20



25

wherein R is an alkylene or substituted alkylene group containing 1 to 20 carbon atoms or an arylene group containing from 6 to 8 carbon atoms, and Y is hydrogen halogen, alkyl, aryl or any group which provides an anionic moiety in aqueous solution. Such Y groups 30 can include, for example:

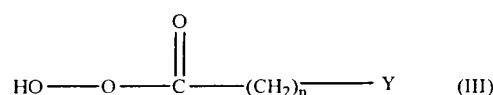


wherein M is H or a water-soluble, salt-forming cation.

10

The organic peroxyacids and salts thereof usable in the present invention can contain either one, two or more peroxy groups and can be either aliphatic or aromatic. When the organic peroxyacid is aliphatic, the unsubstituted acid may have the general formula:

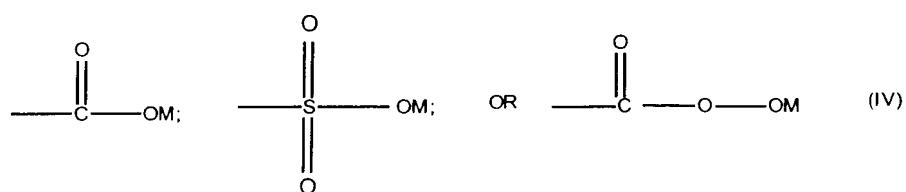
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20

wherein Y can be H, -CH₃, -CH₂Cl,

25

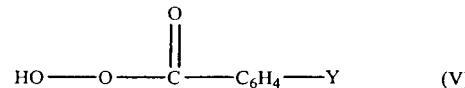


30 And n can be an integer from 60 to 20. Peroxydodecanoic acids, peroxytetradecanoic acids and peroxyhexadecanoic acids are the most preferred compounds of this type, particularly 1,12-d peroxydodecanoic acid (sometimes known as DPDA), 1,14-d peroxytetradecanoic acid and 1,16-d peroxyhexadecanoic acid. Examples of other



preferred compounds of this type are diperoxyazelaic acid, diperoxyadipic and diperoxysebacic acid.

When the organic peroxyacid is aromatic, a unsubstituted acid may have the general
5 formula:



10

wherein Y is, for example hydrogen, halogen, alkyl or a group as defined for formulae (IV) above.

The percarboxy and Y groupings can be in any relative position around the aromatic ring.

15 The ring and/or Y group (if alkyl) can contain any non-interfering substitutents such as halogen or sulphonate groups. Examples of suitable aromatic peroxyacids and salts thereof include monoperoxyphthalic acid, diperoxyterephthalic acid, 4-chlorodiperoxyphthalic acid, diperoxyisophthalic acid, peroxy benzoic acids and ring-substituted peroxy benzoic acids, such as peroxy-alpha-naphthoic acid. A preferred aromatic peroxyacid is
20 diperoxyisophthalic acid.

Another preferred class of peroxygen compounds which can be incorporated to enhance dispensing/dispersibility in water are the anyhdrous perborates described for that purpose in the applicants' European patent specification EP-A-217 454.

25

Transition metal sequestrants such as EDTA, and phosphonic acid derivatives such as EDTMP (ethylene diamine tetra(methylene phosphonate)) may also be included, in addition to the organic substance specified, for example to improve the stability sensitive ingredients such as enzymes, fluorescent agents and perfumes, but provided the
30 composition remains bleaching effective. However, the liquid composition containing the organic substance, is preferably substantially, and more preferably completely, devoid of transition metal sequestrants (other than the organic substance).

The Organic Substance

The present invention requires the presence of an organic substance which forms a complex with a transition metal capable of catalysing atmospheric oxygen bleaching.

5

The organic substance may be incorporated in the substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition, either as a preformed complex of an organic ligand and a transition metal. Alternatively, it may be incorporated as the free organic substance. Without being bound by any theory, it is supposed that the organic substance can complex with a transition metal already present in the water or it might complex with a transition metal present in the substrate. The free organic substance may also be included as a composition of the free organic or a transition metal-substitutable metal-ligand complex, and a source of transition metal, whereby the complex is formed *in situ* in the medium. Generally speaking, the organic substance will usually be an organic ligand. It is preferred that the ligand is a pentadentate ligand or complex thereof.

10

15

The ligand forms a complex with one or more transition metals, in the latter case for example as a dinuclear complex. Suitable transition metals include for example:

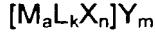
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manganese in oxidation states II-V, iron II-V, copper I-III, cobalt I-III, titanium II-IV,

tungsten IV-VI, vanadium II-V and molybdenum II-VI.

The transition metal complex preferably is of the general formula:

25



in which:

M represents a metal selected from Mn(II)-(III)-(IV)-(V), Cu(I)-(II)-(III), Fe (II)-(III)-(IV)-(V), Co(I)-(II)-(III), Ti(II)-(III)-(IV), V(II)-(III)-(IV)-(V), Mo(II)-(III)-(IV)-(V)-(VI) and W(IV)-(V)-(VI), preferably from Fe(II)-(III)-(IV)-(V);

L represents the ligand, preferably N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane, or its protonated or deprotonated analogue;

X represents a coordinating species selected from any mono, bi or tri charged anions and any neutral molecules able to coordinate the metal in a mono, bi or tridentate manner;

Y represents any non-coordinated counter ion;

5 a represents an integer from 1 to 10;

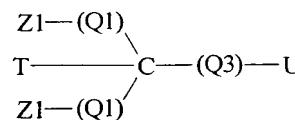
k represents an integer from 1 to 10;

n represents zero or an integer from 1 to 10;

m represents zero or an integer from 1 to 20.

10 Preferably, the complex is an iron complex comprising the ligand N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane. However, it will be appreciated that the pretreatment method of the present invention may instead, or additionally, use other ligands and transition metal complexes, provided that the complex formed is capable of catalysing stain bleaching by atmospheric oxygen. Suitable classes of ligands are
15 described below:

(A) Ligands of the general formula (IA):



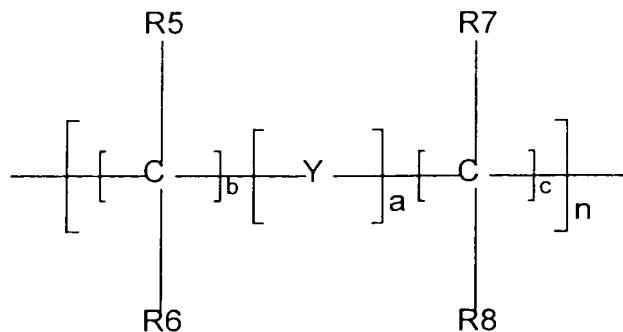
20 (IA)

wherein

Z1 groups independently represent a coordinating group selected from hydroxy, amino, -NHR or -N(R)₂ (wherein R=C₁₋₆-alkyl), carboxylate, amido, -NH-C(NH)NH₂,
25 hydroxyphenyl, a heterocyclic ring optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E or a heteroaromatic ring optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E, the heteroaromatic ring being selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole;

30

Q1 and Q3 independently represent a group of the formula:



5

wherein

$5 \geq a+b+c \geq 1$; $a=0-5$; $b=0-5$; $c=0-5$; $n=0$ or 1 (preferably $n=0$);

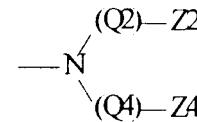
Y independently represents a group selected from $-O-$, $-S-$, $-SO-$, $-SO_2-$, $-C(O)-$,
 10 arylene, alkylene, heteroarylene, heterocycloalkylene, $-(G)P-$, $-P(O)-$ and $-(G)N-$, wherein
 G is selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, cycloalkyl, each except hydrogen being
 optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E;

R5, R6, R7, R8 independently represent a group selected from hydrogen,
 15 hydroxyl, halogen, $-R$ and $-OR$, wherein R represents alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl,
 heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally
 substituted by one or more functional groups E,
 or R5 together with R6, or R7 together with R8, or both, represent oxygen,
 or R5 together with R7 and/or independently R6 together with R8, or R5 together
 20 with R8 and/or independently R6 together with R7, represent C_{1-6} -alkylene optionally
 substituted by C_{1-4} -alkyl, $-F$, $-Cl$, $-Br$ or $-I$;

T represents a non-coordinated group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen,
 -R and -OR, wherein R represents alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl,
 arylalkyl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one
 25 or more functional groups E (preferably T= $-H$, $-OH$, methyl, methoxy or benzyl);

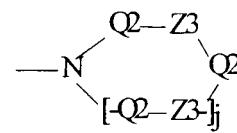
U represents either a non-coordinated group T independently defined as above or a coordinating group of the general formula (IIA), (IIIA) or (IVA):

5

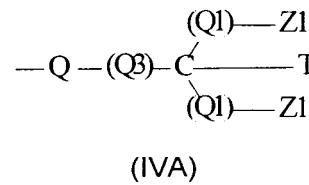


(IIA)

10



(IIIA)



(IVA)

wherein

15

Q2 and Q4 are independently defined as for Q1 and Q3;

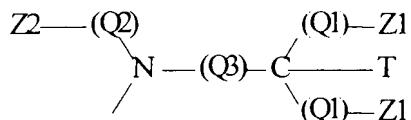
Q represents -N(T)- (wherein T is independently defined as above), or an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole;

Z2 is independently defined as for Z1;

25

Z3 groups independently represent -N(T)- (wherein T is independently defined as above);

5 Z4 represents a coordinating or non-coordinating group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen, -NH-C(NH)NH₂, -R and -OR, wherein R= alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E, or Z4 represents a group of the general formula (IIAa):



(IIAa)

and

10 $1 \leq j < 4$.

15 Preferably, Z1, Z2 and Z4 independently represent an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole. More preferably, Z1, Z2 and Z4 independently represent groups selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl. Most preferred is that Z1, Z2 and Z4 each represent optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl.

20 The groups Z1, Z2 and Z4 if substituted, are preferably substituted by a group selected from C₁₋₄-alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl, methoxy, hydroxy, nitro, amino, carboxyl, halo, and carbonyl. Preferred is that Z1, Z2 and Z4 are each substituted by a methyl group. Also, we prefer that the Z1 groups represent identical groups.

25 Each Q1 preferably represents a covalent bond or C1-C4-alkylene, more preferably a covalent bond, methylene or ethylene, most preferably a covalent bond.

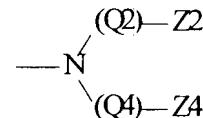
30 Group Q preferably represents a covalent bond or C1-C4-alkylene, more preferably a covalent bond.

The groups R5, R6, R7, R8 preferably independently represent a group selected from -H, hydroxy-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, halo-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, nitroso, formyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, carboxyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl and esters and salts thereof, carbamoyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, sulfo-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl and esters and salts thereof, sulfamoyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, amino-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, aryl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, 5 alkoxy-C₀-C₈-alkyl, carbonyl-C₀-C₆-alkoxy, and C₀-C₂₀-alkylamide. Preferably, none of R5-R8 is linked together.

Non-coordinated group T preferably represents hydrogen, hydroxy, methyl, ethyl, benzyl, or methoxy.

10

In one aspect, the group U in formula (IA) represents a coordinating group of the general formula (IIA):



15

(IIA)

According to this aspect, it is preferred that Z2 represents an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, 20 isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole, more preferably optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl or optionally substituted benzimidazol-2-yl.

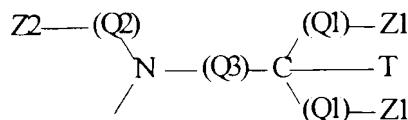
It is also preferred, in this aspect, that Z4 represents an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, 25 pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole, more preferably optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, or a non-coordinating group selected from hydrogen, hydroxy, alkoxy, alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, or benzyl.

30 In preferred embodiments of this aspect, the ligand is selected from:
1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-N-methyl-N-(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)methylamine;

1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-N,N-bis(6-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)methylamine;
 1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-N,N-bis(5-carboxymethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)methylamine;
 1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-benzyl-N,N-bis(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)methylamine; and
 1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-N,N-bis(benzimidazol-2-ylmethyl)methylamine.

5

In a variant of this aspect, the group Z4 in formula (IIA) represents a group of the general formula (IIAa):



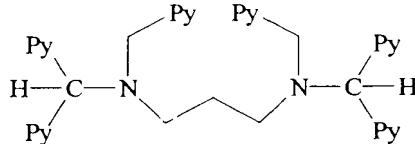
10

(IIAa)

In this variant, Q4 preferably represents optionally substituted alkylene, preferably -CH₂-CHOH-CH₂- or -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-.

In a preferred embodiment of this variant, the ligand is:

15

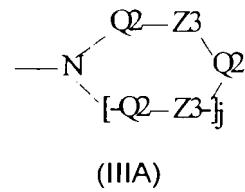


wherein -Py represents pyridin-2-yl.

In another aspect, the group U in formula (IA) represents a coordinating group of the

20

general formula (IIIA):

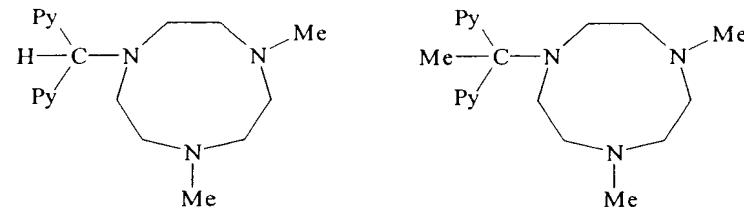


25 wherein j is 1 or 2, preferably 1.

According to this aspect, each Q2 preferably represents $-(CH_2)_n-$ (n=2-4), and each Z3 preferably represents $-N(R)-$ wherein R = -H or C_{1-4} -alkyl, preferably methyl.

In preferred embodiments of this aspect, the ligand is selected from:

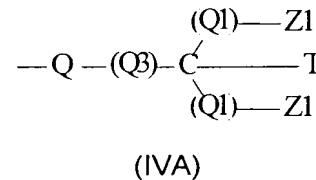
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wherein -Py represents pyridin-2-yl.

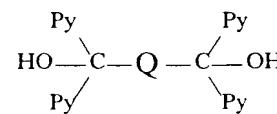
In yet another aspect, the group U in formula (IA) represents a coordinating group of the

10 general formula (IVA):



15 In this aspect, Q preferably represents $-N(T)-$ (wherein T= -H, methyl, or benzyl) or pyridin-diyl.

In preferred embodiments of this aspect, the ligand is selected from:

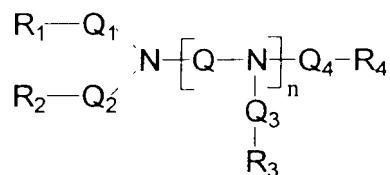


20

wherein -Py represents pyridin-2-yl, and -Q- represents pyridin-2,6-diyl.

(B) Ligands of the general formula (IB):

5



(IB)

wherein

10

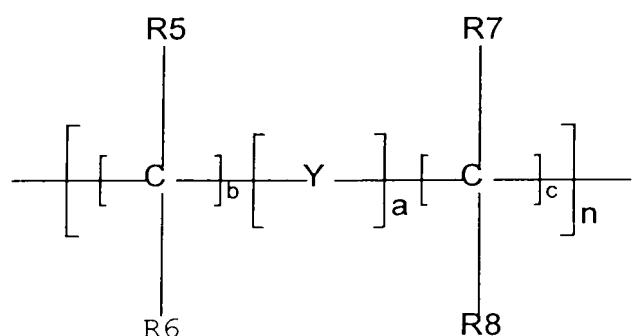
$n = 1$ or 2 , whereby if $n = 2$, then each $-\text{Q}_3-\text{R}_3$ group is independently defined;

$\text{R}_1, \text{R}_2, \text{R}_3, \text{R}_4$ independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen, $-\text{NH}-\text{C}(\text{NH})\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{R}$ and $-\text{OR}$, wherein R = alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E ,

15

$\text{Q}_1, \text{Q}_2, \text{Q}_3, \text{Q}_4$ and Q independently represent a group of the formula:

20



wherein

$5 \geq a+b+c \geq 1$; $a=0-5$; $b=0-5$; $c=0-5$; $n=1$ or 2 ;

Y independently represents a group selected from -O-, -S-, -SO-, -SO₂-, -C(O)-, arylene, alkylene, heteroarylene, heterocycloalkylene, -(G)P-, -P(O)- and -(G)N- , wherein G is selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, cycloalkyl, each except hydrogen being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E;

5

R5, R6, R7, R8 independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen, -R and -OR, wherein R represents alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E,

10

or R5 together with R6, or R7 together with R8, or both, represent oxygen, or R5 together with R7 and/or independently R6 together with R8, or R5 together with R8 and/or independently R6 together with R7, represent C₁₋₆-alkylene optionally substituted by C₁₋₄-alkyl, -F, -Cl, -Br or -I,

15

provided that at least two of R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄ comprise coordinating heteroatoms and no more than six heteroatoms are coordinated to the same transition metal atom.

20

At least two, and preferably at least three, of R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄ independently represent a group selected from carboxylate, amido, -NH-C(NH)NH₂, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole.

25

Preferably, substituents for groups R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄, when representing a heterocyclic or heteroaromatic ring, are selected from C₁₋₄-alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl, methoxy, hydroxy, nitro, amino, carboxyl, halo, and carbonyl.

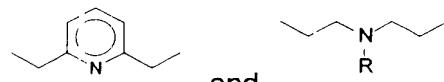
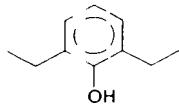
The groups Q₁, Q₂, Q₃, Q₄ preferably independently represent a group selected from -CH₂- and -CH₂CH₂-.

30

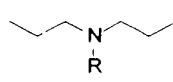
Group Q is preferably a group selected from $-(CH_2)_{2-4}-$, $-CH_2CH(OH)CH_2-$,



optionally substituted by methyl or ethyl,



, and



wherein R represents -H or C_{1-4} -alkyl.

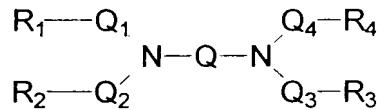
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Preferably, Q_1 , Q_2 , Q_3 , Q_4 are defined such that $a=b=0$, $c=1$ and $n=1$, and Q is defined such that $a=b=0$, $c=2$ and $n=1$.

The groups R5, R6, R7, R8 preferably independently represent a group selected from -H, hydroxy- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, halo- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, nitroso, formyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, carboxyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl and esters and salts thereof, carbamoyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, sulfo- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl and esters and salts thereof, sulfamoyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, amino- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, aryl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, alkoxy- C_0-C_6 -alkyl, carbonyl- C_0-C_6 -alkoxy, and C_0-C_{20} -alkylamide. Preferably, none of R5-R8 is linked together.

15

In a preferred aspect, the ligand is of the general formula (IIB):



20

(IIB)

wherein

Q_1 , Q_2 , Q_3 , Q_4 are defined such that $a=b=0$, $c=1$ or 2 and $n=1$;

Q is defined such that $a=b=0$, $c=2,3$ or 4 and $n=1$; and

25 R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , R_7 , R_8 are independently defined as for formula (I).

Preferred classes of ligands according to this aspect, as represented by formula (IIB) above, are as follows:

30 (i) ligands of the general formula (IIB) wherein:

R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from carboxylate, amido, -NH-C(NH)NH₂, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, 5 isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole.

In this class, we prefer that:

Q is defined such that a=b=0, c=2 or 3 and n=1;

R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from 10 optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl.

(ii) ligands of the general formula (IIB) wherein:

R₁, R₂, R₃ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from carboxylate, amido, -NH-C(NH)NH₂, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole; and

20 R₄ represents a group selected from hydrogen, C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted alkyl, C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted arylalkyl, aryl, and C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted NR₃⁺ (wherein R=C₁₋₈-alkyl).

In this class, we prefer that:

25 Q is defined such that a=b=0, c=2 or 3 and n=1;

R₁, R₂, R₃ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl; and

30 R₄ represents a group selected from hydrogen, C₁₋₁₀ optionally substituted alkyl, C₁₋₅-furanyl, C₁₋₅ optionally substituted benzylalkyl, benzyl, C₁₋₅ optionally substituted alkoxy, and C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted N⁺Me₃.

(iii) ligands of the general formula (IIB) wherein:

5 R₁, R₄ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from carboxylate, amido, -NH-C(NH)NH₂, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole; and

10 R₂, R₃ each independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted alkyl, C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted arylalkyl, aryl, and C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted NR₃⁺ (wherein R=C₁₋₈-alkyl).

10 In this class, we prefer that:

Q is defined such that a=b=0, c=2 or 3 and n=1;

15 R₁, R₄ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl; and

20 R₂, R₃ each independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, C₁₋₁₀ optionally substituted alkyl, C₁₋₅-furanyl, C₁₋₅ optionally substituted benzylalkyl, benzyl, C₁₋₅ optionally substituted alkoxy, and C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted N⁺Me₃.

20 Examples of preferred ligands in their simplest forms are:

25 N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-trimethylammoniumpropyl-N,N',N'-tris(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-(2-hydroxyethylene)-N,N',N'-tris(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

30 N,N,N',N'-tetrakis(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylene-diamine;

N,N'-dimethyl-N,N'-bis(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-cyclohexane-1,2-diamine;

N-(2-hydroxyethylene)-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

30 N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-benzyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N-ethyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

N,N,N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-N'(2'-methoxy-ethyl-1)-ethylenediamine;

N,N,N'-tris(1-methyl-benzimidazol-2-yl)-N'-methyl-ethylenediamine;
N-(furan-2-yl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;
N-(2-hydroxyethylene)-N,N',N'-tris(3-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)-ethylenediamine;

5 N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-ethyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-benzyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-(2-hydroxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-(2-methoxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;

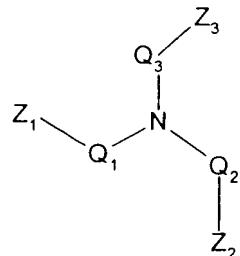
10 N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-ethyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-benzyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-(2-hydroxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
15 N-(2-methoxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;

N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-ethyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-benzyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
20 N-(2-hydroxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-(2-methoxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-ethyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
25 N-benzyl-N,N',N'-tris(5-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine; and
N-(2-methoxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(5-ethyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine.

More preferred ligands are:

30 N-methyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-ethyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-benzyl-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine;
N-(2-hydroxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine; and
N-(2-methoxyethyl)-N,N',N'-tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)ethylene-1,2-diamine.

(C) Ligands of the general formula (IC):

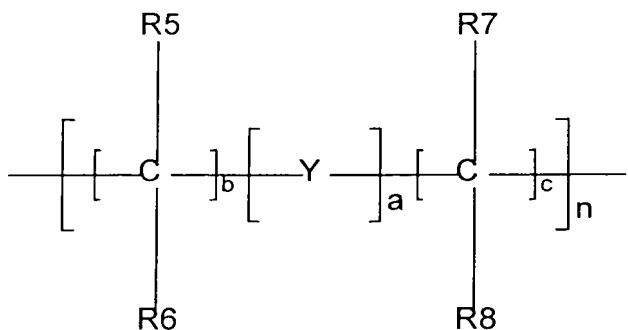


(IC)

5 wherein

Z_1 , Z_2 and Z_3 independently represent a coordinating group selected from carboxylate, amido, $-\text{NH}-\text{C}(\text{NH})\text{NH}_2$, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, 10 isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole;

Q_1 , Q_2 , and Q_3 independently represent a group of the formula:



15

wherein

$5 \geq a+b+c \geq 1$; $a=0-5$; $b=0-5$; $c=0-5$; $n=1$ or 2 ;

20

Y independently represents a group selected from $-\text{O}-$, $-\text{S}-$, $-\text{SO}-$, $-\text{SO}_2-$, $-\text{C}(\text{O})-$, arylene, alkylene, heteroarylene, heterocycloalkylene, $-(\text{G})\text{P}-$, $-\text{P}(\text{O})-$ and $-(\text{G})\text{N}-$, wherein G is selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, cycloalkyl, each except hydrogen being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E ; and

R5, R6, R7, R8 independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen, -R and -OR, wherein R represents alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E,
5 or R5 together with R6, or R7 together with R8, or both, represent oxygen, or R5 together with R7 and/or independently R6 together with R8, or R5 together with R8 and/or independently R6 together with R7, represent C₁₋₆-alkylene optionally substituted by C₁₋₄-alkyl, -F, -Cl, -Br or -I.

10 Z₁, Z₂ and Z₃ each represent a coordinating group, preferably selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl. Preferably, Z₁, Z₂ and Z₃ each represent optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl.

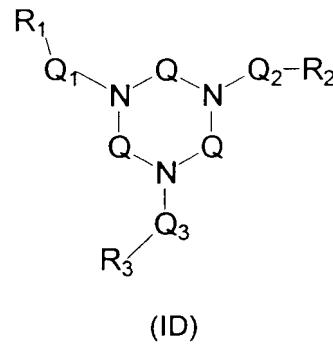
15 Optional substituents for the groups Z₁, Z₂ and Z₃ are preferably selected from C₁₋₄-alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl, methoxy, hydroxy, nitro, amino, carboxyl, halo, and carbonyl, preferably methyl.

20 Also preferred is that Q₁, Q₂ and Q₃ are defined such that a=b=0, c=1 or 2, and n=1. Preferably, each Q₁, Q₂ and Q₃ independently represent C₁₋₄-alkylene, more preferably a group selected from -CH₂- and -CH₂CH₂-.

25 The groups R5, R6, R7, R8 preferably independently represent a group selected from -H, hydroxy-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, halo-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, nitroso, formyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, carboxyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl and esters and salts thereof, carbamoyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, sulfo-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl and esters and salts thereof, sulfamoyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, amino-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, aryl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, alkoxy-C₀-C₈-alkyl, carbonyl-C₀-C₆-alkoxy, and C₀-C₂₀-alkylamide. Preferably, none of
30 R5-R8 is linked together.

Preferably, the ligand is selected from tris(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)amine, tris(3-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)amine, tris(5-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)amine, and tris(6-methyl-pyridin-2-ylmethyl)amine.

(D) Ligands of the general formula (ID):

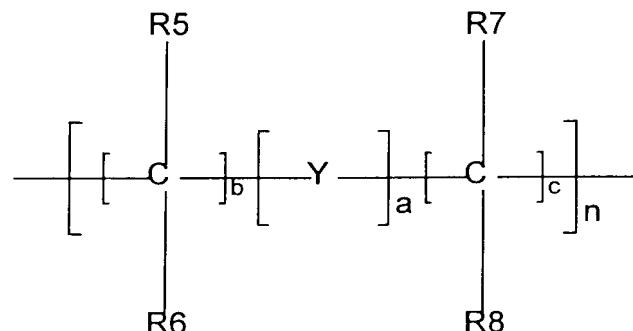


wherein

10 R_1 , R_2 , and R_3 independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen, $-\text{NH}-\text{C}(\text{NH})\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{R}$ and $-\text{OR}$, wherein R = alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E ;

15 Q independently represent a group selected from C_{2-3} -alkylene optionally substituted by H , benzyl or C_{1-8} -alkyl;

Q₁, Q₂ and Q₃ independently represent a group of the formula:



wherein

$5 \geq a+b+c \geq 1$; $a=0-5$; $b=0-5$; $c=0-5$; $n=1$ or 2 ;

5 Y independently represents a group selected from $-O-$, $-S-$, $-SO-$, $-SO_2-$, $-C(O)-$, arylene, alkylene, heteroarylene, heterocycloalkylene, $-(G)P-$, $-P(O)-$ and $-(G)N-$, wherein G is selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, cycloalkyl, each except hydrogen being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E; and

10 R₅, R₆, R₇, R₈ independently represent a group selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, halogen, -R and -OR, wherein R represents alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E,
or R₅ together with R₆, or R₇ together with R₈, or both, represent oxygen,
15 or R₅ together with R₇ and/or independently R₆ together with R₈, or R₅ together with R₈ and/or independently R₆ together with R₇, represent C₁₋₆-alkylene optionally substituted by C₁₋₄-alkyl, -F, -Cl, -Br or -I,

20 provided that at least one, preferably at least two, of R₁, R₂ and R₃ is a coordinating group.

At least two, and preferably at least three, of R₁, R₂ and R₃ independently represent a group selected from carboxylate, amido, $-NH-C(NH)NH_2$, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from 25 pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole. Preferably, at least two of R₁, R₂, R₃ each independently represent a coordinating group selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted 30 quinolin-2-yl.

Preferably, substituents for groups R₁, R₂, R₃, when representing a heterocyclic or heteroaromatic ring, are selected from C₁₋₄-alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl, methoxy, hydroxy, nitro, amino, carboxyl, halo, and carbonyl.

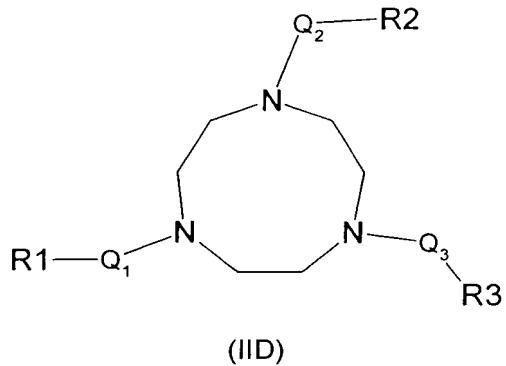
Preferably, Q_1 , Q_2 and Q_3 are defined such that $a=b=0$, $c=1,2,3$ or 4 and $n=1$. Preferably, the groups Q_1 , Q_2 and Q_3 independently represent a group selected from $-CH_2-$ and $-CH_2CH_2-$.

5 Group Q is preferably a group selected from $-CH_2CH_2-$ and $-CH_2CH_2CH_2-$.

The groups R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 preferably independently represent a group selected from $-H$, hydroxy- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, halo- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, nitroso, formyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, carboxyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl and esters and salts thereof, carbamoyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, sulfo- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl and esters and salts thereof, sulfamoyl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, amino- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, aryl- C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, C_0-C_{20} -alkyl, alkoxy- C_0-C_8 -alkyl, carbonyl- C_0-C_6 -alkoxy, and C_0-C_{20} -alkylamide. Preferably, none of R_5-R_8 is linked together.

In a preferred aspect, the ligand is of the general formula (IID):

15



wherein R_1 , R_2 , R_3 are as defined previously for R_1 , R_2 , R_6 , and Q_1 , Q_2 , Q_3 are as defined previously.

Preferred classes of ligands according to this preferred aspect, as represented by formula (IID) above, are as follows:

25 (i) ligands of the general formula (IID) wherein:

R_1 , R_2 , R_3 each independently represent a coordinating group selected from carboxylate, amido, $-NH-C(NH)NH_2$, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine,

pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole.

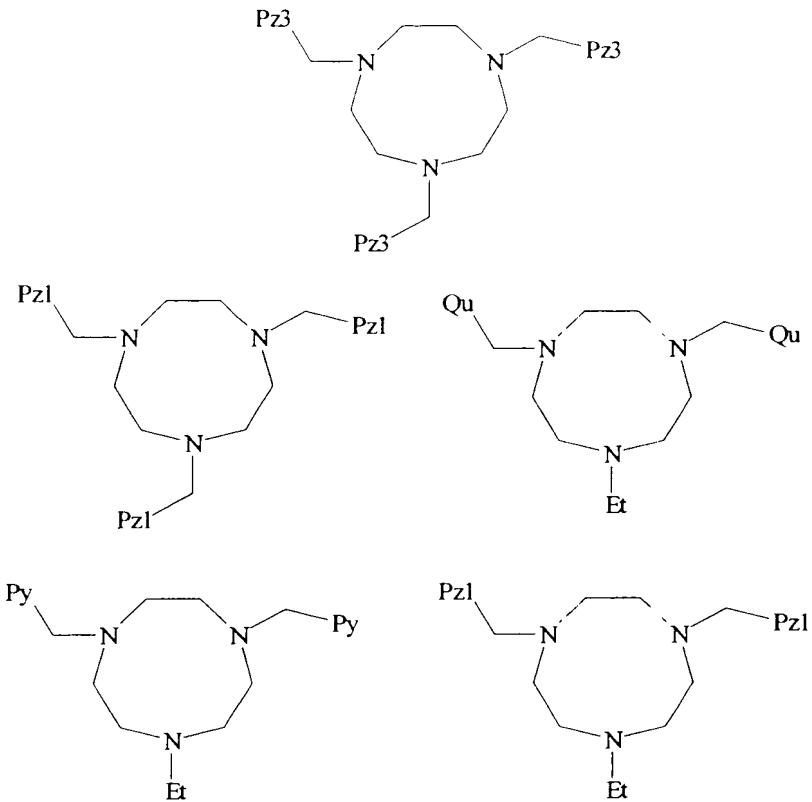
In this class, we prefer that:

5 R1, R2, R3 each independently represent a coordinating group selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl.

10 (ii) ligands of the general formula (IID) wherein:
two of R1, R2, R3 each independently represent a coordinating group selected from carboxylate, amido, -NH-C(NH)NH₂, hydroxyphenyl, an optionally substituted heterocyclic ring or an optionally substituted heteroaromatic ring selected from pyridine, pyrimidine, pyrazine, pyrazole, imidazole, benzimidazole, quinoline, quinoxaline, triazole, 15 isoquinoline, carbazole, indole, isoindole, oxazole and thiazole; and
one of R1, R2, R3 represents a group selected from hydrogen, C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted alkyl, C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted arylalkyl, aryl, and C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted NR₃⁺ (wherein R=C₁₋₈-alkyl).

20 In this class, we prefer that:
two of R1, R2, R3 each independently represent a coordinating group selected from optionally substituted pyridin-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-2-yl, optionally substituted imidazol-4-yl, optionally substituted pyrazol-1-yl, and optionally substituted quinolin-2-yl; and
25 one of R1, R2, R3 represents a group selected from hydrogen, C₁₋₁₀ optionally substituted alkyl, C₁₋₅-furanyl, C₁₋₅ optionally substituted benzylalkyl, benzyl, C₁₋₅ optionally substituted alkoxy, and C₁₋₂₀ optionally substituted N⁺Me₃.

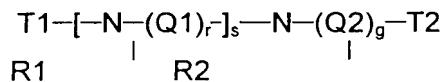
In especially preferred embodiments, the ligand is selected from:



wherein -Et represents ethyl, -Py represents pyridin-2-yl, Pz3 represents pyrazol-3-yl, Pz1 represents pyrazol-1-yl, and Qu represents quinolin-2-yl.

5

(E) Ligands of the general formula (IE):



10

(IE)

wherein

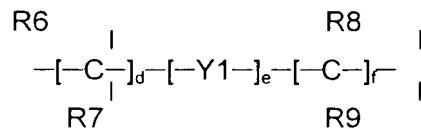
g represents zero or an integer from 1 to 6;

r represents an integer from 1 to 6;

15

s represents zero or an integer from 1 to 6;

Q1 and Q2 independently represent a group of the formula:



5 wherein

$5 \geq d+e+f \geq 1$; $d=0-5$; $e=0-5$; $f=0-5$;

each Y1 independently represents a group selected from $-\text{O}-$, $-\text{S}-$, $-\text{SO}-$, $-\text{SO}_2-$, $-\text{C}(\text{O})-$, arylene, alkylene, heteroarylene, heterocycloalkylene, $-(\text{G})\text{P}-$, $-\text{P}(\text{O})-$ and $-(\text{G})\text{N}-$, wherein G is selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, cycloalkyl, each except

10 hydrogen being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E ;

if $s>1$, each $-[\text{N}(\text{R1})-(\text{Q1}),-]-$ group is independently defined;

R1, R2, R6, R7, R8, R9 independently represent a group selected from hydrogen,

15 hydroxyl, halogen, $-\text{R}$ and $-\text{OR}$, wherein R represents alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl or a carbonyl derivative group, R being optionally substituted by one or more functional groups E ,

or R6 together with R7, or R8 together with R9, or both, represent oxygen,

or R6 together with R8 and/or independently R7 together with R9, or R6 together

20 with R9 and/or independently R7 together with R8, represent C_{1-6} -alkylene optionally substituted by C_{1-4} -alkyl, $-\text{F}$, $-\text{Cl}$, $-\text{Br}$ or $-\text{I}$;

or one of R1-R9 is a bridging group bound to another moiety of the same general formula;

25 T1 and T2 independently represent groups R4 and R5, wherein R4 and R5 are as defined for R1-R9, and if $g=0$ and $s>0$, R1 together with R4, and/or R2 together with R5, may optionally independently represent $=\text{CH}-\text{R10}$, wherein R10 is as defined for R1-R9, or

30 T1 and T2 may together $(-\text{T2}-\text{T1}-)$ represent a covalent bond linkage when $s>1$ and $g>0$;

if T1 and T2 together represent a single bond linkage, Q1 and/or Q2 may independently represent a group of the formula: $=\text{CH}-[\text{Y1},-]-\text{CH}=$ provided R1 and/or

R2 are absent, and R1 and/or R2 may be absent provided Q1 and/or Q2 independently represent a group of the formula: $=\text{CH}-[\text{Y1}-]_e-\text{CH}=$.

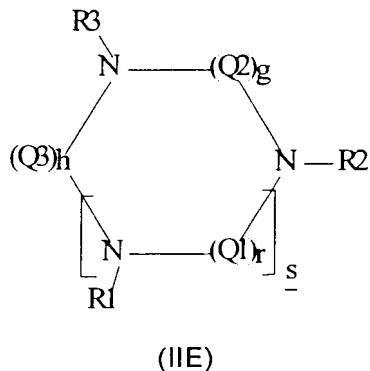
The groups R1-R9 are preferably independently selected from -H, hydroxy-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, 5 halo-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, nitroso, formyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, carboxyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl and esters and salts thereof, carbamoyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, sulpho-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl and esters and salts thereof, sulphamoyl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, amino-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, aryl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, heteroaryl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, C₀-C₂₀-alkyl, alkoxy-C₀-C₈-alkyl, carbonyl-C₀-C₆-alkoxy, and aryl-C₀-C₆-alkyl and C₀-C₂₀-alkylamide.

10

One of R1-R9 may be a bridging group which links the ligand moiety to a second ligand moiety of preferably the same general structure. In this case the bridging group is independently defined according to the formula for Q1, Q2, preferably being alkylene or hydroxy-alkylene or a heteroaryl-containing bridge, more preferably C₁₋₆-alkylene 15 optionally substituted by C₁₋₄-alkyl, -F, -Cl, -Br or -I.

In a first variant according to formula (IE), the groups T1 and T2 together form a single bond linkage and s>1, according to general formula (IIE):

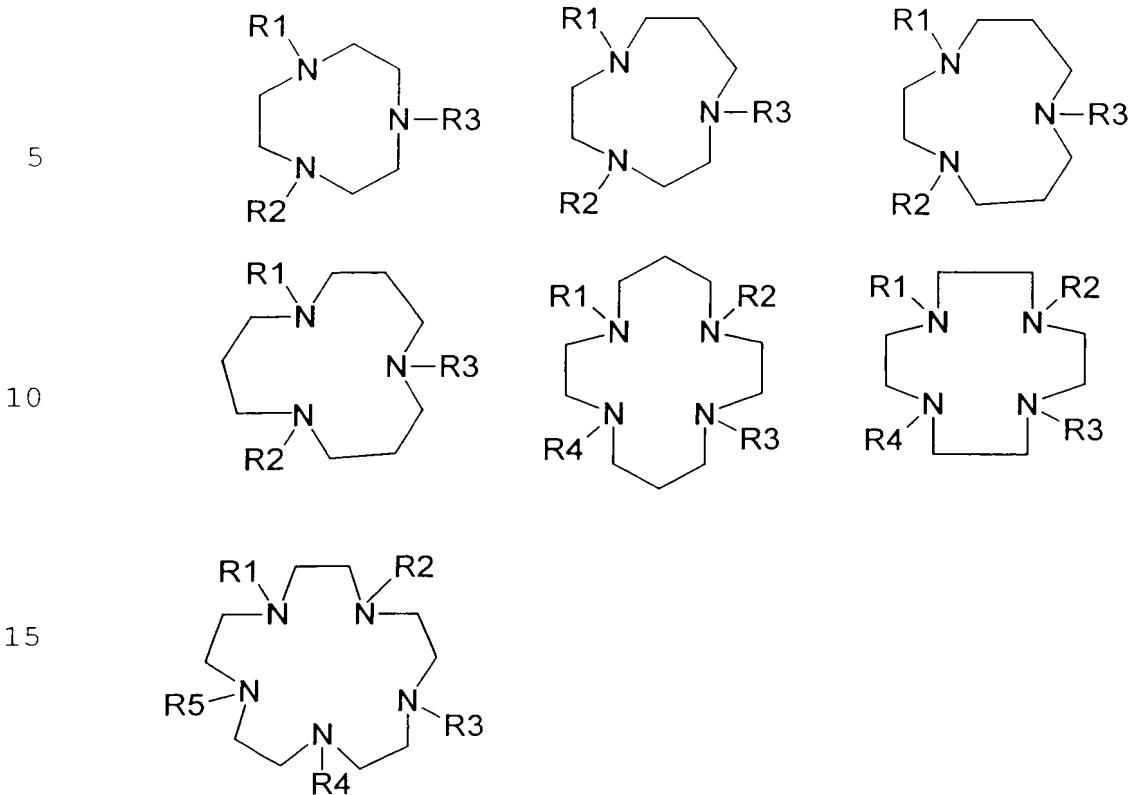
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25

wherein R3 independently represents a group as defined for R1-R9; Q3 independently represents a group as defined for Q1, Q2; h represents zero or an integer from 1 to 6; and s=s-1.

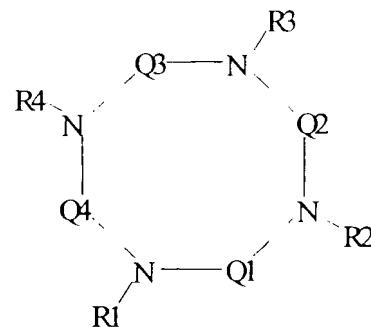
In a first embodiment of the first variant, in general formula (II E), $s=1, 2$ or 3 ; $r=g=h=1$; $d=2$ or 3 ; $e=f=0$; $R6=R7=H$, preferably such that the ligand has a general formula selected from:



20 In these preferred examples, R1, R2, R3 and R4 are preferably independently selected from -H, alkyl, aryl, heteroaryl, and/or one of R1-R4 represents a bridging group bound to another moiety of the same general formula and/or two or more of R1-R4 together represent a bridging group linking N atoms in the same moiety, with the bridging group being alkylene or hydroxy-alkylene or a heteroaryl-containing bridge, preferably heteroarylene. More preferably, R1, R2, R3 and R4 are independently selected from -H, methyl, ethyl, isopropyl, nitrogen-containing heteroaryl, or a bridging group bound to another moiety of the same general formula or linking N atoms in the same moiety with the bridging group being alkylene or hydroxy-alkylene.

25

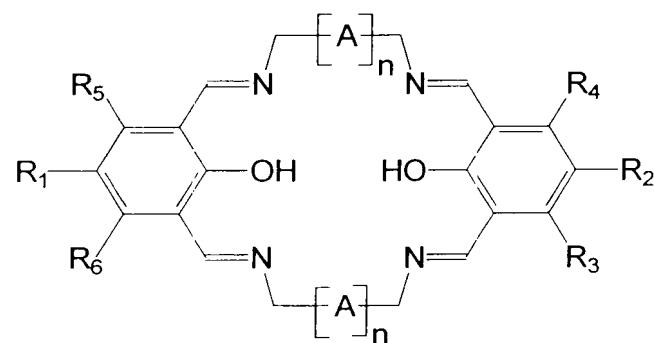
30 In a second embodiment of the first variant, in general formula (II-E), $s=2$ and $r=g=h=1$, according to the general formula:



In this second embodiment, preferably R1-R4 are absent; both Q1 and Q3 represent $=\text{CH}-[\text{Y1}]_e-\text{CH=}$; and both Q2 and Q4 represent $-\text{CH}_2-[\text{Y1}]_n-\text{CH}_2-$.

5

Thus, preferably the ligand has the general formula:



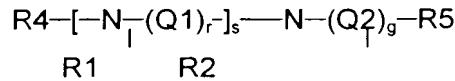
wherein A represents optionally substituted alkylene optionally interrupted by a

10 heteroatom; and n is zero or an integer from 1 to 5.

Preferably, R1-R6 represent hydrogen, n=1 and A= $-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CHOH}-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{N}(\text{R})\text{CH}_2-$ or $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{N}(\text{R})\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$ wherein R represents hydrogen or alkyl, more preferably A= $-\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CHOH}-$ or $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{NHCH}_2\text{CH}_2-$.

15

In a second variant according to formula (IE), T1 and T2 independently represent groups R4, R5 as defined for R1-R9, according to the general formula (IIIIE):

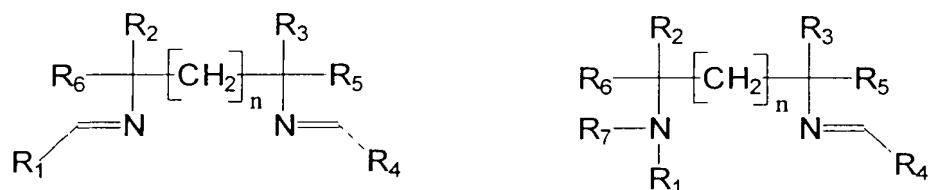


20

(III E)

In a first embodiment of the second variant, in general formula (III E), s=1; r=1; g=0; d=f=1; e=0-4; Y1= -CH₂-; and R1 together with R4, and/or R2 together with R5, 5 independently represent =CH-R10, wherein R10 is as defined for R1-R9. In one example, R2 together with R5 represents =CH-R10, with R1 and R4 being two separate groups. Alternatively, both R1 together with R4, and R2 together with R5 may independently represent =CH-R10. Thus, preferred ligands may for example have a structure selected from:

10



wherein n = 0-4.

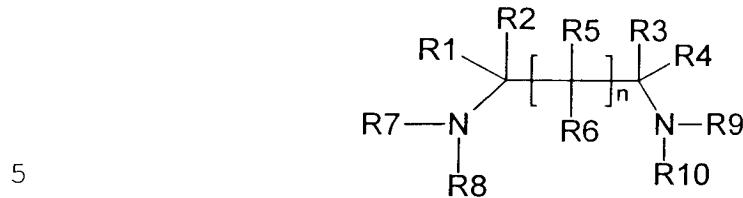
Preferably, the ligand is selected from:

15



wherein R1 and R2 are selected from optionally substituted phenols, heteroaryl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyls, R3 and R4 are selected from -H, alkyl, aryl, optionally substituted phenols, 20 heteroaryl-C₀-C₂₀-alkyls, alkylaryl, aminoalkyl, alkoxy, more preferably R1 and R2 being selected from optionally substituted phenols, heteroaryl-C₀-C₂-alkyls, R3 and R4 are selected from -H, alkyl, aryl, optionally substituted phenols, nitrogen-heteroaryl-C₀-C₂-alkyls.

25 In a second embodiment of the second variant, in general formula (III E), s=1; r=1; g=0; d=f=1; e=1-4; Y1= -C(R')(R''), wherein R' and R'' are independently as defined for R1-R9. Preferably, the ligand has the general formula:



The groups R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 in this formula are preferably -H or $\text{C}_0\text{-C}_{20}\text{-alkyl}$, $n=0$ or 1, R6 is -H, alkyl, -OH or -SH, and R7, R8, R9, R10 are preferably each independently selected from -H, $\text{C}_0\text{-C}_{20}\text{-alkyl}$, heteroaryl- $\text{C}_0\text{-C}_{20}\text{-alkyl}$, alkoxy- $\text{C}_0\text{-C}_8\text{-alkyl}$ and amino- $\text{C}_0\text{-C}_{20}\text{-alkyl}$.

10

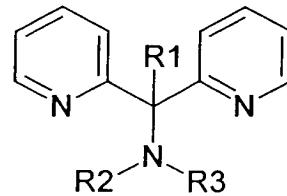
In a third embodiment of the second variant, in general formula (IIIIE), $s=0$; $g=1$; $d=e=0$; $f=1\text{-}4$. Preferably, the ligand has the general formula:



This class of ligand is particularly preferred according to the invention.

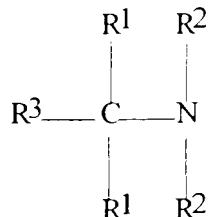
20

More preferably, the ligand has the general formula:



25 wherein R1, R2, R3 are as defined for R2, R4, R5.

In a fourth embodiment of the second variant, the ligand is a pentadentate ligand of the general formula (IVE):



(IVE)

wherein

each R^1 , R^2 independently represents $-\text{R}^4-\text{R}^5$,5 R^3 represents hydrogen, optionally substituted alkyl, aryl or arylalkyl, or $-\text{R}^4-\text{R}^5$,each R^4 independently represents a single bond or optionally substituted alkylene, alkenylene, oxyalkylene, aminoalkylene, alkylene ether, carboxylic ester or carboxylic amide, and10 each R^5 independently represents an optionally N-substituted aminoalkyl group or an optionally substituted heteroaryl group selected from pyridinyl, pyrazinyl, pyrazolyl, pyrrolyl, imidazolyl, benzimidazolyl, pyrimidinyl, triazolyl and thiazolyl.

Ligands of the class represented by general formula (IVE) are also particularly preferred according to the invention. The ligand having the general formula (IVE), as defined above, is a pentadentate ligand. By 'pentadentate' herein is meant that five hetero atoms can coordinate to the metal M ion in the metal-complex.

In formula (IVE), one coordinating hetero atom is provided by the nitrogen atom in the methylamine backbone, and preferably one coordinating hetero atom is contained in each 20 of the four R^1 and R^2 side groups. Preferably, all the coordinating hetero atoms are nitrogen atoms.

The ligand of formula (IVE) preferably comprises at least two substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl groups in the four side groups. The heteroaryl group is preferably a pyridin-2-yl group and, if substituted, preferably a methyl- or ethyl-substituted pyridin-2-yl group. 25 More preferably, the heteroaryl group is an unsubstituted pyridin-2-yl group. Preferably, the heteroaryl group is linked to methylamine, and preferably to the N atom thereof, via a methylene group. Preferably, the ligand of formula (IVE) contains at least one optionally substituted amino-alkyl side group, more preferably two amino-ethyl side groups, in 30 particular 2-(N-alkyl)amino-ethyl or 2-(N,N-dialkyl)amino-ethyl.

Thus, in formula (IVE) preferably R¹ represents pyridin-2-yl or R² represents pyridin-2-yl-methyl. Preferably R² or R¹ represents 2-amino-ethyl, 2-(N-(m)ethyl)amino-ethyl or 2-(N,N-di(m)ethyl)amino-ethyl. If substituted, R⁵ preferably represents 3-methyl pyridin-2-yl. 5 R³ preferably represents hydrogen, benzyl or methyl.

Examples of preferred ligands of formula (IVE) in their simplest forms are:

(i) pyridin-2-yl containing ligands such as:

10 N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine;
N,N-bis(pyrazol-1-yl-methyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine;
N,N-bis(imidazol-2-yl-methyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine;
N,N-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl-methyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-bis(pyrazol-1-yl)methylamine;
15 N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-bis(imidazol-2-yl)methylamine;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)methylamine;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyrazol-1-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;
20 N,N-bis(pyrazol-1-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(imidazol-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(imidazol-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;
25 N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyrazol-1-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyrazol-1-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(imidazol-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(imidazol-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)-1-aminoethane;
30 N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminohexane;
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane;

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(4-sulphonic acid-phenyl)-1-aminoethane;

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(pyridin-3-yl)-1-aminoethane;

5 N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(pyridin-4-yl)-1-aminoethane;

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(1-alkyl-pyridinium-4-yl)-1-aminoethane;

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(1-alkyl-pyridinium-3-yl)-1-aminoethane;

10 N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-(1-alkyl-pyridinium-2-yl)-1-aminoethane;

(ii) 2-amino-ethyl containing ligands such as:

N,N-bis(2-(N-alkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine;

15 N,N-bis(2-(N-alkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(pyrazol-1-yl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(2-(N-alkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(imidazol-2-yl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(2-(N-alkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(2-(N,N-dialkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(2-(N,N-dialkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(pyrazol-1-yl)methylamine;

20 N,N-bis(2-(N,N-dialkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(imidazol-2-yl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(2-(N,N-dialkyl)amino-ethyl)-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-bis(2-amino-ethyl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(pyrazol-1-yl-methyl)-bis(2-amino-ethyl)methylamine;

N,N-bis(imidazol-2-yl-methyl)-bis(2-amino-ethyl)methylamine;

25 N,N-bis(1,2,4-triazol-1-yl-methyl)-bis(2-amino-ethyl)methylamine.

More preferred ligands are:

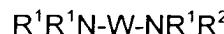
N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-bis(pyridin-2-yl)methylamine, hereafter referred to as N4Py.

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane, hereafter referred to as

30 MeN4Py,

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-2-phenyl-1-aminoethane, hereafter referred to as BzN4Py.

In a fifth embodiment of the second variant, the ligand represents a pentadentate or hexadentate ligand of general formula (VE):



5

(VE)

wherein

each R^1 independently represents $-R^3-V$, in which R^3 represents optionally substituted alkylene, alkenylene, oxyalkylene, aminoalkylene or alkylene ether, and

10 V represents an optionally substituted heteroaryl group selected from pyridinyl, pyrazinyl, pyrazolyl, pyrrolyl, imidazolyl, benzimidazolyl, pyrimidinyl, triazolyl and thiazolyl;

W represents an optionally substituted alkylene bridging group selected from $-CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH_2CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH_2-C_6H_4-CH_2-$, $-CH_2-C_6H_{10}-CH_2-$, and $-CH_2-C_{10}H_6-CH_2-$; and

15 R^2 represents a group selected from R^1 , and alkyl, aryl and arylalkyl groups optionally substituted with a substituent selected from hydroxy, alkoxy, phenoxy, carboxylate, carboxamide, carboxylic ester, sulphonate, amine, alkylamine and $N^+(R^4)_3$, wherein R^4 is selected from hydrogen, alkanyl, alkenyl, arylalkanyl, arylalkenyl, oxyalkanyl, oxyalkenyl, aminoalkanyl, aminoalkenyl, alkanyl ether and alkenyl ether.

20

The ligand having the general formula (VE), as defined above, is a pentadentate ligand or, if $R^1=R^2$, can be a hexadentate ligand. As mentioned above, by 'pentadentate' is meant that five hetero atoms can coordinate to the metal M ion in the metal-complex. Similarly, by 'hexadentate' is meant that six hetero atoms can in principle coordinate to 25 the metal M ion. However, in this case it is believed that one of the arms will not be bound in the complex, so that the hexadentate ligand will be penta coordinating.

In the formula (VE), two hetero atoms are linked by the bridging group W and one coordinating hetero atom is contained in each of the three R^1 groups. Preferably, the 30 coordinating hetero atoms are nitrogen atoms.

The ligand of formula (VE) comprises at least one optionally substituted heteroaryl group in each of the three R^1 groups. Preferably, the heteroaryl group is a pyridin-2-yl group, in particular a methyl- or ethyl-substituted pyridin-2-yl group. The heteroaryl group is linked

to an N atom in formula (VE), preferably *via* an alkylene group, more preferably a methylene group. Most preferably, the heteroaryl group is a 3-methyl-pyridin-2-yl group linked to an N atom *via* methylene.

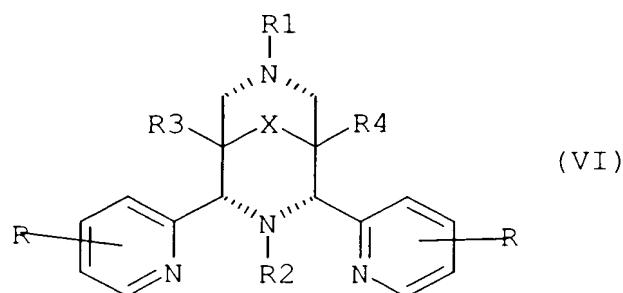
5 The group R² in formula (VE) is a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, aryl or arylalkyl group, or a group R¹. However, preferably R² is different from each of the groups R¹ in the formula above. Preferably, R² is methyl, ethyl, benzyl, 2-hydroxyethyl or 2-methoxyethyl. More preferably, R² is methyl or ethyl.

10 The bridging group W may be a substituted or unsubstituted alkylene group selected from -CH₂CH₂-, -CH₂CH₂CH₂-, -CH₂CH₂CH₂CH₂-, -CH₂-C₆H₄-CH₂-, -CH₂-C₆H₁₀-CH₂-, and -CH₂-C₁₀H₆-CH₂- (wherein -C₆H₄-, -C₆H₁₀-, -C₁₀H₆- can be *ortho*-, *para*-, or *meta*-C₆H₄-, -C₆H₁₀-, -C₁₀H₆-). Preferably, the bridging group W is an ethylene or 1,4-butylene group, more preferably an ethylene group.

15 Preferably, V represents substituted pyridin-2-yl, especially methyl-substituted or ethyl-substituted pyridin-2-yl, and most preferably V represents 3-methyl pyridin-2-yl.

(F) Ligands of the classes disclosed in WO-A-98/39098 and WO-A-98/39406.

20 Another suitable class of ligands comprises the ligands having the formula (VI):



25 wherein each R is independently selected from: hydrogen, hydroxyl, -NH-CO-H, -NH-CO-C1-C4-alkyl, -NH₂, -NH-C1-C4-alkyl, and C1-C4-alkyl;
 R1 and R2 are independently selected from:
 C1-C4-alkyl,

C6-C10-aryl, and,

a group containing a heteroatom capable of coordinating to a transition metal, preferably wherein at least one of R1 and R2 is the group containing the heteroatom;

R3 and R4 are independently selected from hydrogen, C1-C8 alkyl, C1-C8-alkyl-O-C1-

5 C8-alkyl, C1-C8-alkyl-O-C6-C10-aryl, C6-C10-aryl, C1-C8-hydroxyalkyl, and -
(CH₂)_nC(O)OR5

wherein R5 is C1-C4-alkyl, n is from 0 to 4, and mixtures thereof; and,

X is selected from C=O, -[C(R6)₂]_y- wherein Y is from 0 to 3 each R6 is independently selected from hydrogen, hydroxyl, C1-C4-alkoxy and C1-C4-alkyl.

10

The counter ions Y in formula (A1) balance the charge z on the complex formed by the ligand L, metal M and coordinating species X. Thus, if the charge z is positive, Y may be an anion such as RCOO⁻, BPh₄⁻, ClO₄⁻, BF₄⁻, PF₆⁻, RSO₃⁻, RSO₄⁻, SO₄²⁻, NO₃⁻, F⁻, Cl⁻, Br⁻, 15 or I⁻, with R being hydrogen, optionally substituted alkyl or optionally substituted aryl. If z is negative, Y may be a common cation such as an alkali metal, alkaline earth metal or (alkyl)ammonium cation.

Suitable counter ions Y include those which give rise to the formation of storage-stable

20 solids. Preferred counter ions for the preferred metal complexes are selected from

RCOO⁻, ClO₄⁻, BF₄⁻, PF₆⁻, RSO₃⁻ (in particular CF₃SO₃⁻), RSO₄⁻, SO₄²⁻, NO₃⁻, F⁻, Cl⁻, Br⁻, and I⁻, wherein R represents hydrogen or optionally substituted phenyl, naphthyl or C₁-C₄ alkyl.

25 It will be appreciated that the complex (A1) can be formed by any appropriate means,

including *in situ* formation whereby precursors of the complex are transformed into the active complex of general formula (A1) under conditions of storage or use. Preferably, the complex is formed as a well-defined complex or in a solvent mixture comprising a salt of the metal M and the ligand L or ligand L-generating species. Alternatively, the catalyst

30 may be formed *in situ* from suitable precursors for the complex, for example in a solution or dispersion containing the precursor materials. In one such example, the active catalyst may be formed *in situ* in a mixture comprising a salt of the metal M and the ligand L, or a ligand L-generating species, in a suitable solvent. Thus, for example, if M is iron, an iron salt such as FeSO₄ can be mixed in solution with the ligand L, or a ligand L-generating

species, to form the active complex. Thus, for example, the composition may be formed from a mixture of the ligand L and a metal salt MX_n in which preferably $n=1-5$, more preferably 1-3. In another such example, the ligand L, or a ligand L-generating species, can be mixed with metal M ions present in the substrate or wash liquor to form the active 5 catalyst *in situ*. Suitable ligand L-generating species include metal-free compounds or metal coordination complexes that comprise the ligand L and can be substituted by metal M ions to form the active complex according the formula (A1).

Throughout the description and claims generic groups have been used, for example alkyl, 10 alkoxy, aryl. Unless otherwise specified the following are preferred group restrictions that may be applied to generic groups found within compounds disclosed herein:

alkyl: C1-C6-alkyl,

15 alkenyl: C2-C6-alkenyl,

cycloalkyl: C3-C8-cycloalkyl,

alkoxy: C1-C6-alkoxy,

20 alkylene: selected from the group consisting of: methylene; 1,1-ethylene; 1,2-ethylene; 1,1-propylene; 1,2-propylene; 1,3-propylene; 2,2-propylene; butan-2-ol-1,4-diyl; propan-2-ol-1,3-diyl; and 1,4-butylene,

25 aryl: selected from homoaromatic compounds having a molecular weight under 300,

arylene: selected from the group consisting of: 1,2-benzene; 1,3-benzene; 1,4-benzene; 1,2-naphthalene; 1,3-naphthalene; 1,4-naphthalene; 2,3-naphthalene; phenol-2,3-diyl; phenol-2,4-diyl; phenol-2,5-diyl; and phenol-2,-6-diyl,

30 heteroaryl: selected from the group consisting of: pyridinyl; pyrimidinyl; pyrazinyl; triazolyl; pyridazinyl; 1,3,5-triazinyl; quinolinyl; isoquinolinyl; quinoxalinyl; imidazolyl; pyrazolyl; benzimidazolyl; thiazolyl; oxazolidinyl; pyrrolyl; carbazolyl; indolyl; and isoindolyl,

heteroarylene: selected from the group consisting of: pyridin-2,3-diyl; pyridin-2,4-diyl; pyridin-2,5-diyl; pyridin-2,6-diyl; pyridin-3,4-diyl; pyridin-3,5-diyl; quinolin-2,3-diyl; quinolin-2,4-diyl; quinolin-2,8-diyl; isoquinolin-1,3-diyl; isoquinolin-1,4-diyl; pyrazol-1,3-diyl; pyrazol-3,5-diyl; triazole-3,5-diyl; triazole-1,3-diyl; pyrazin-2,5-diyl; and imidazole-2,4-diyl,

5 heterocycloalkyl: selected from the group consisting of: pyrrolinyl; pyrrolidinyl; morpholinyl; piperidinyl; piperazinyl; hexamethylene imine; and oxazolidinyl,

amine: the group $-N(R)_2$ wherein each R is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; and phenyl, wherein when both R are C1-C6-alkyl both R

10 together may form an -NC3 to an -NC5 heterocyclic ring with any remaining alkyl chain forming an alkyl substituent to the heterocyclic ring,

halogen: selected from the group consisting of: F; Cl; Br and I,

15 sulphonate: the group $-S(O)_2OR$, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; Li; Na; K; Cs; Mg; and Ca,

sulphate: the group $-OS(O)_2OR$, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; Li; Na; K; Cs; Mg; and Ca,

20 sulphone: the group $-S(O)_2R$, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5 and amine (to give sulphonamide) selected from the group: - NR'2, wherein each R' is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; and phenyl, wherein when both R' are C1-C6-alkyl both R' together may form 25 an -NC3 to an -NC5 heterocyclic ring with any remaining alkyl chain forming an alkyl substituent to the heterocyclic ring,

carboxylate derivative: the group $-C(O)OR$, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen, C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5, Li; Na; K; Cs; Mg; and Ca,

30 carbonyl derivative: the group $-C(O)R$, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5 and amine (to give amide) selected from the group: - NR'2, wherein each R' is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; and phenyl, wherein when both R' are C1-C6-alkyl both R' together may form

an -NC3 to an -NC5 heterocyclic ring with any remaining alkyl chain forming an alkyl substituent to the heterocyclic ring,

phosphonate: the group $-P(O)(OR)_2$, wherein each R is independently selected from:

5 hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; Li; Na; K; Cs; Mg; and Ca,

phosphate: the group $-OP(O)(OR)_2$, wherein each R is independently selected from:

hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; Li; Na; K; Cs; Mg; and Ca,

10 phosphine: the group $-P(R)_2$, wherein each R is independently selected from:
hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; and C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5,

phosphine oxide: the group $-P(O)R_2$, wherein R is independently selected from:
hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; phenyl; and C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; and amine (to give

15 phosphonamidate) selected from the group: $-NR'2$, wherein each R' is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; C1-C6-alkyl-C6H5; and phenyl, wherein when both R' are C1-C6-alkyl both R' together may form an -NC3 to an -NC5 heterocyclic ring with any remaining alkyl chain forming an alkyl substituent to the heterocyclic ring.

20 Unless otherwise specified the following are more preferred group restrictions that may be applied to groups found within compounds disclosed herein:

alkyl: C1-C4-alkyl,

25 alkenyl: C3-C6-alkenyl,

cycloalkyl: C6-C8-cycloalkyl,

alkoxy: C1-C4-alkoxy,

30 alkylene: selected from the group consisting of: methylene; 1,2-ethylene; 1,3-propylene; butan-2-ol-1,4-diyl; and 1,4-butylene,

aryl: selected from group consisting of: phenyl; biphenyl, naphthalenyl; anthracenyl; and phenanthrenyl,

arylene: selected from the group consisting of: 1,2-benzene, 1,3-benzene, 1,4-

5 benzene, 1,2-naphthalene, 1,4-naphthalene, 2,3-naphthalene and phenol-2,6-diyl,

heteroaryl: selected from the group consisting of: pyridinyl; pyrimidinyl; quinolinyl; pyrazolyl; triazolyl; isoquinolinyl; imidazolyl; and oxazolidinyl,

10 heteroarylene: selected from the group consisting of: pyridin-2,3-diyl; pyridin-2,4-diyl;

pyridin-2,6-diyl; pyridin-3,5-diyl; quinolin-2,3-diyl; quinolin-2,4-diyl; isoquinolin-1,3-diyl; isoquinolin-1,4-diyl; pyrazol-3,5-diyl; and imidazole-2,4-diyl,

heterocycloalkyl: selected from the group consisting of: pyrrolidinyl; morpholinyl;

15 piperidinyl; and piperazinyl,

amine: the group -N(R)₂, wherein each R is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; and benzyl,

20 halogen: selected from the group consisting of: F and Cl,

sulphonate: the group -S(O)₂OR, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; Na; K; Mg; and Ca,

25 sulphate: the group -OS(O)₂OR, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl;

Na; K; Mg; and Ca,

sulphone: the group -S(O)₂R, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl;

benzyl and amine selected from the group: -NR'2, wherein each R' is independently

30 selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; and benzyl,

carboxylate derivative: the group -C(O)OR, wherein R is selected from hydrogen;

Na; K; Mg; Ca; C1-C6-alkyl; and benzyl,

carbonyl derivative: the group: -C(O)R, wherein R is selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; benzyl and amine selected from the group: -NR'2, wherein each R' is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; and benzyl,

5 phosphonate: the group -P(O)(OR)₂, wherein each R is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl, benzyl; Na; K; Mg; and Ca,

phosphate: the group -OP(O)(OR)₂, wherein each R is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; benzyl; Na; K; Mg; and Ca,

10 phosphine: the group -P(R)₂, wherein each R is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; and benzyl,

15 phosphine oxide: the group -P(O)R₂, wherein R is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; benzyl and amine selected from the group: -NR'2, wherein each R' is independently selected from: hydrogen; C1-C6-alkyl; and benzyl.

Other compounds or ligands forming complexes with transition metals, and which are capable of catalysing bleaching by atmospheric oxygen, are suitable as organic
20 substances in the liquid bleaching compositions of the present invention. These include the classes of complexes of a transition metal coordinated to a macropolycyclic ligand disclosed in WO-A-98/39098 and WO-A-98/39406.

The substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition may be used for laundry cleaning,
25 hard surface cleaning (including cleaning of lavatories, kitchen work surfaces, floors, mechanical ware washing etc.). As is generally known in the art, bleaching compositions are also employed in waste-water treatment, pulp bleaching during the manufacture of paper, leather manufacture, dye transfer inhibition, food processing, starch bleaching, sterilisation, whitening in oral hygiene preparations and/or contact lens disinfection.

30 In the context of the present invention bleaching should be understood as relating generally to the decolourisation of stains or of other materials attached to or associated with a substrate. However, it is envisaged that the present invention can be applied where a requirement is the

removal and/or neutralisation by an oxidative bleaching reaction of malodours or other undesirable components attached to or otherwise associated with a substrate. Furthermore, in the context of the present invention bleaching is to be understood as being restricted to any bleaching mechanism or process that does not require the presence of light or activation by light. Thus, photobleaching compositions and processes relying on the use of photobleach catalysts or photobleach activators and the presence of light are excluded from the present invention.

In typical washing compositions the level of the organic substance is such that the in-use level is from 0.05 μ M to 50 mM, with preferred in-use levels for domestic laundry operations falling in the range 1 to 100 μ M. Higher levels may be desired and applied in industrial bleaching processes, such as textile and paper pulp bleaching.

The amount of the substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition in each unit dose envelope may for example be from 10ml to 100ml, e.g. from 12.5ml to 75ml, preferably from 15ml to 60ml, more preferably from 20ml to 55ml.

For unit dose products of these fill-volumes, the substantially non-aqueous liquid detergent composition may for example contain from 0.001g to 0.5g, preferably from 0.002g to 0.3 g, more preferably from 0.0025g to 0.25g of the organic substance.

Therefore, the amount of the organic substance will typically be from 0.005% to 1%, preferably from 0.0075% to 0.5%, more preferably from 0.01% to 0.1% by weight of the total substantially non-aqueous liquid detergent composition.

When the organic substance is provided in the form of a complex with a transit metal ion, either preformed or formed *in situ* in the composition, the aforementioned weights and percentages include the metal ion.

Preferably, the aqueous medium has a pH in the range from pH 6 to 13, more preferably from pH 6 to 11, and most preferably from 7 to 10.

Other Components

5 The laundry treatment agent according to the invention may further comprise one or more ingredients selected from non-ionic or cationic surfactants, builders, polymers, fluorescers, enzymes, silicone foam control agents, perfumes, dyes, bleaches and preservatives.

Uses

10 The present invention is not limited to those circumstances in which a washing machine is employed, but can be applied where washing is performed in some alternative vessel. In these circumstances it is envisaged that the unit dose product can be placed in a bowl, bucket or other vessel which is being employed, or from any implement which is being employed, such as a brush, bat or dolly, or from any suitable applicator.

15



The invention will now be further illustrated by way of the following non-limiting examples:

EXAMPLES

5

Example 1

This example describes a synthesis of the catalyst as employed in Example 2:

10 **(i) Preparation of MeN4Py ligand (A):**

N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane, MeN4Py, was prepared according to the procedure found in EP 0 909 809 A.

15 **(ii) Synthesis of the complex FeMeN4PyCl₂ (B):**

MeN4Py ligand (33.7 g; 88.5mmoles) was dissolved in 500ml dry methanol. Small portions of FeCl₂.4H₂O (0.95eq; 16.7g; 84.0 mmoles) were added, yielding a clear red solution. After addition, the solution was stirred for 30 minutes at room temperature, after which the methanol was removed (rotary-evaporator). The dry solid was ground and 150 ml of ethylacetate was added and the mixture was stirred until a fine red powder was obtained. This powder was washed twice with ethyl acetate, dried in the air and further dried under vacuum (40 oC). El. Anal. Calc. for [Fe(MeN4py)Cl]Cl.2H₂O: C 53.03; H 5.16; N 12.89; Cl 13.07; Fe 10.01%. Found C 52.29/ 52.03; H 5.05/5.03; N 12.55/12.61; Cl: 12.73/12.69; Fe: 10.06/10.01%.

Incorporation of Metal Complexes into unit dose products

Ingredient	Wt%
Nonionic surfactant	26.6
Monopropylene glycol	5.5
Complex (B)	See below
Pigment premix	0.017
Glycerol	21.36
Monoethanolamine	7.56
Oleic fatty acid	13.10
Linear alkyl benzene sulfonate	20.1
Perfume	1.6
Protease Enzyme	1.0
Water	balance

5

25ml of the above formation added was filled into a polyvinyl alcohol film capsule formed by the horizontal form-fill technique. The film was of a kind incorporating a common having carboxylate functionality.

10 Example 1

In a composition for demonstrable bleach activity in a single wash, the amount of complex (B) was 0.15% in the above formulation.

15

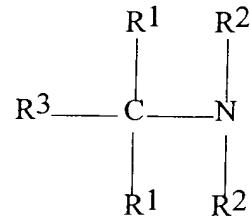
Example 2

20 In a composition showing bleach activity over repeat washes, the amount of complex (B) was 0.01 wt% in the above formulation.

CLAIMS:

1. A unit dose cleaning product comprising a capsule formed of a material capable of dissolving, disintegrating or dispersing in a wash liquor, the capsule being filled with a substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition in an amount sufficient to clean a single wash load, said composition including an organic substance with forms of a complex with a transition metal, the complex being capable of catalysing bleaching of a substrate by atmospheric oxygen.

5 2. A unit dose product according to claim 1, wherein the organic substance comprises a pentadentate ligand of the general formula (B):



(B)

15 wherein

each R^1 , R^2 independently represents $-\text{R}^4-\text{R}^5$,
 R^3 represents hydrogen, optionally substituted alkyl, aryl or arylalkyl, or $-\text{R}^4-\text{R}^5$,
each R^4 independently represents a single bond or optionally substituted alkylene, alkenylene, oxyalkylene, aminoalkylene, alkylene ether, carboxylic ester or carboxylic amide, and
each R^5 independently represents an optionally N-substituted aminoalkyl group or an optionally substituted heteroaryl group selected from pyridinyl, pyrazinyl, pyrazolyl, pyrrolyl, imidazolyl, benzimidazolyl, pyrimidinyl, triazolyl and thiazolyl.

20 25 3. A unit dose product according to claim 2, wherein the ligand is N,N-bis(pyridin-2-yl-methyl)-1,1-bis(pyridin-2-yl)-1-aminoethane.

4. A unit dose product according to any preceding claim, wherein the substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition comprises from 0.005% to 1%, preferably from

0.0075% to 0.5%, more preferably from 0.01% to 0.1% by weight of the composition of total of the organic substance.

5. A unit dose product according to any preceding claim, wherein the amount of the

substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition within the capsule is from 10ml to 100ml, preferably from 12.5ml to 75ml, more preferably from 15ml to 60ml, especially from 20ml to 55ml.

6. A unit dose product according to claim 5, wherein substantially non-aqueous liquid

cleaning composition within the capsule comprises from 0.001g to 0.5g, preferably from 0.002g to 0.3g, more preferably from 0.0025g to 0.25g by weight of total of the organic substance.

7. A unit dose product according to any preceding claim, wherein the substantially

non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition further comprises a surfactant.

8. A unit dose product according to any preceding claim, wherein the substantially

non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition further comprises a builder.

20 9. A unit dose product according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the organic

substance comprises a preformed complex of a ligand and a transition metal.

10. A unit dose product according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the organic

substance comprises a free ligand for complexing with a transition metal present in the

25 water and/or present in the substrate.

11. A unit dose product according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the organic

substance comprises a composition of a free ligand or a transition metal-substitutable

metal-ligand complex, and a source of transition metal.

30

12. A method of cleaning a substrate comprising bringing into contact, a wash liquor

in which it immersed, the substrate and a unit dose product according to any preceding claim.

ABSTRACT:**UNIT DOSE CLEANING PRODUCT**

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A unit dose cleaning product comprising a capsule formed of a material capable of dissolving, disintegrating or dispersing in a wash liquor, the capsule being filled with a substantially non-aqueous liquid cleaning composition in an amount sufficient to clean a
10 single wash load, said composition including an organic substance with forms of a complex with a transition metal, the complex being capable of catalysing bleaching of a substrate by atmospheric oxygen.

